
ANECDOTES

OF THE

DELBOROUGH FAMILY.

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DELBOROUGH JAMES

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ANECDOTES
OF THE
DELBOROUGH FAMILY.

A NOVEL.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

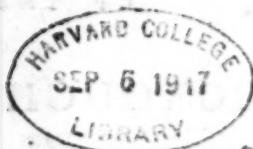
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BY MRS. GUNNING.

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Porcellian Club

ANECDOTES
OF THE
DELBOROUGH FAMILY.

CHAP. XXX.

MISS Pladlow had the misfortune to lose a very amiable mother, at the age of ten months, and when, for her sake, the doctor, whose character was more respectable than his finances, accepted a situation in the Duke of Angrave's family, he committed his precious darling, only

then six years old, to the care of Mrs. Parkington, contenting himself with such occasional visitations, as did not encroach on the indulgence of his noble patron, or interfere with the official duties of his office.

His honest heart reposed in the security that his daughter was placed, where she would be well taken care of, much better he thought, than he could have done for her in his own house, having always set his face against second marriages, having no female relation to whose charge he could intrust her, and not being in circumstances to give her the advantages of a genteel education, by procuring the attendance of masters, at the moderate rate of half a guinea a lesson, a tax as permanently settled by all sorts of venders of polite accomplishments, as our malt, cyder, or even land-tax is fixed by parliament itself.

Mrs.

Mrs. Parkington really merited the good opinion Doctor Pladlow had entertained of her, she was in every respect a truly deserving woman; she had been many years established in his neighbourhood; her school was flourishing, and her attention to her pupils unremitting, and if it had not been quite so much divided, the situation of the poor little motherless Ann would have been fully as eligible, as if she had been brought up under the immediate eye of her surviving parent. Mrs. Parkington loved and cherished her with true maternal fondness, and gave to the forming and improvement of her mind, as great a proportion of her time, as she could have given to any individual scholar, had that individual been a daughter of her own, but the volatile disposition of her pretty charge, required constant attendance and constant culture, which was no more in her power to bestow, than for a gardener to stand over one par-

ticular flower, and neglect all the rest of his parterre.

Miss Pladlow had entered her teens in all the majesty of beauty, when a vacancy happened in the school, by the marriage of a sober discreet woman, whose department it was to instruct the young ladies in the French language, and on this occasion Mrs. Parkington applied to Doctor Pladlow, who was then in the Duke of Angrave's family, for his assistance in recommending a person to supply the loss of her late assistant.

Now the Doctor, though the best man in the world, was certainly the worst that could have been employed on so delicate a commission; but willing to execute it to the best of his abilities, he referred the request to the person who superintended the education of his patron's daughters, and she promised to look out for a country woman
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of her own (being a Parisian) who was properly qualified for the office she was wanted to fill; accordingly the next week, a Mademoiselle was dispatched down to the school in a stage coach, with more recommendations from ladies of the very first fashion, than money, ribbon, blond lace, or rouge.

As we have already brought forward this important character, being the very same Mademoiselle who attended Miss Pladlow in her excursion to the wood, where they were met by Lord Greendale, it may not be altogether unnecessary to say a few more words on the subject of her merits, and how she came by them. Several ladies of quality, old and young, married and single, the forming of whose minds and morals had been her peculiar task, in the thirty years she had taken up her abode in the metropolis, were all of them ready, on account of pass'd services,

not only to declare, but to sign such declarations, with their own honorable, and right honorable names, that Mademoiselle Scuderie was mighty well qualified for a governess; that she spoke the language of her own country with purity; knew something of Italian, and had behaved with much discretion whilst in their service; twenty of those written testimonials she carried with her to Mrs. Parkington, and being an adept in the science of hypocrisy, after a trial of six years, Mrs. Parkington was as much the dupe of her arts, as on her first coming down to take possession of her post.

The good school-mistress had often thanked Doctor Pladlow for his recommendation, who in truth knew nothing more of the person so much approved, except what he had been told by the governess, who lived with Lady Margaret and Lady Selina Dangle; he thought her better

ter intitled to his neighbours acknowledgments than himself, of course conveyed them to the right owner, who always received them very graciously, not so much for their own, as for the Doctor's sake, who she regarded as a comely widower, might make a handsome husband, and not having heard that his late wife had provided him with an heiress, to enjoy the riches he was in a fair way to accumulate, she would have read her recantation of Popish errors, to have presented him a lawful heir to his rising fortune; these pleasing hopes were all her own, the Doctor had no part in them, such an idea had never entered into his head, or such a wish into his heart; of which truth, after twelve months of indefatigable labour to attain her purpose, Madame Villeroy was so well convinced, that instead of pursuing him any longer with tokens of preference, she attempted to annoy him with airs of cold civility, almost bordering on

contempt, to which he really was, or pretended to be, as blind as to the softer blandishments of love and tenderness, which made her so compleatly his enemy, that she swore never to miss an occasion through her whole life, to do him a disservice, whenever it should happen to be in her power.

Mademoiselle Scuderie found the confinement of a school did not quite agree with the very liberal notions of freedom she had imbibed, by her long residence in the land of liberty, particularly after having passed so much of her time in the houses of the great, where liberty might be said to reign unfettered, though in less exalted situation, liberty is obliged to submit to the restraints of a few odd old fashioned laws, the observance of which, to those who can look forward to no better prospect than an approving conscience, and eternal rewards, is considered as a matter of

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of more consequence than the generality of great people believe them to be; but what could poor Mademoiselle do to right herself, her place was a lucrative one, and places of profit she knew, by late experience, was more easily lost than gained. Notwithstanding she had been governess and chief confidant to twenty ladies of high rank, having no further occasion for her services, being arrived at that happy age, when they could manage their own little affairs, the only thing they could be prevailed upon to give her, and what of all others she least deserved, was a good character, so that when she got into her present establishment, she was literally in a state of starvation, and to which she was very loth to return; great as her objections were to the sort of life, her necessities had compelled her to accept.

The extreme beauty of Miss Pladlow, afforded a distant prospect of better days

to Mademoiselle ; she knew the power such a blaze of charms must have on the hearts of all mankind, the moment they should be exhibited to the world, and by making an interest in her affection, she hoped to be a sharer in any good fortune that might hereafter attend her ; with this advantage in view, all her hours of leisure were dedicated to filling the poor child's head with folly, and her heart with vanity, by which destructive arts, she had gained such an ascendancy over her, that she would have given up the whole world, rather than be separated from her dear Mademoiselle ; she had nearly died of grief when her father fetched her from school, and returned to it with as large a proportion of joy, when Lord Greendale was expected at Redberry.

In novels and romances, she was perhaps as well read as any other young lady, in whose education Mademoiselle had been concerned.

concerned ; she was herself a great lover of such light summer reading, and had a pretty large collection, which she called her own, but which, in fact, had been hired for the use of her former pupils, and afterwards forgot to be returned, as the names of different circulating libraries on the bindings clearly announced ; the box that contained those prohibited treasures, and forbidden pleasures, was conveyed to the school house, under the denomination of wearing apparel, and made her public entry more respectable than it would otherwise have been ; for to speak truth, all her wardrobe, except the cloaths on her back, might have been packed up in a comb-case.

She not only indulged her beautiful pupil with reading all sorts of novels, good, bad and indifferent, but would also recount to her the histories of all the families she had lived with ; would tell her how it was

the fashion for mothers to keep daughters in their nurseries, 'till they might themselves be mothers, and how cleverly those very daughters had at last out-witted their mothers ; how many young ladies that she had brought up, had got married and divorced in less than two years, and how many more of her acquaintance, who had not a six-pence to cross themselves with, had got rich husbands, merely by their beauty, and then she never failed to draw an inference in favour of her lovely friend, so very palatable and cordial, as by frequent repetition to perfectly intoxicate her senses.

Nature had made her amiable ; her understanding was not at least below mediocrity, and her heart had many good qualities ; but Mademoiselle was never an admirer of the works of nature, except to destroy them, so that Miss Pladlow's mind was as much out of repair, at the age
of

of eighteen, by the coquetry and affection thrown into it by means of Mademoiselle Scuderie, as it could possibly have been, had she passed three winters in town, in the bosom of fashion and the splendid circles of high life.

On the day marked out for the misery of Lord Greendale, and the conquest of Miss Pladlow, the two female friends went to the wood, in consequence of an appointment made by Mademoiselle, to be met there by an old woman who lived in the neighbourhood, and passed for a fortune-teller; what happened on this occasion has been spoken of in its proper place, we have only therefore to add, that after the Marquis had taken leave, Mademoiselle, in her officious eagerness to congratulate Ann on the conquest she had made, full of wonder who the stranger could be, and of admiration at the handsomeness of his person, and the gracefulness of his manners, tumbled over

over a stone that lay in her way, and in the fall hurt her ankle so much, that Miss Pladlow could not lift her from the ground, but was forced to run to the house for assistance; she was carried home in a chair, and put to bed, to which she was confined several days, for though no bone was broken, or dislocated, the strain was a very bad one, and what made it a grievous accident to Ann, was the disappointment of her hopes to meet the agreeable stranger the next day, as she had most indiscreetly promised him she would do.

Fair and gentle readers, you who are yet unhackneyed in the ways of the world, stop at this part, and contemplate the very natural picture of real life we hold up for your inspection: look at Miss Pladlow in the back ground, that is to say, in the first stage of her infancy, you will there see her innocent, artless, modest, and timid, the most interesting light in which your
sex

sex can ever appear. See the destroyer of those feminine graces, the Syren, whose song is death, approach her in the disguise of friendship ; she holds the cup of flattery to her lips, infused with deadly poison, and that Syren is Mademoiselle Scuderie ; for having listened to her voice, and been directed by her counsel, Miss Pladlow, though still innocent and modest, is no longer artless or timid. In her attachment to the insidious French woman, she may be reckoned unfortunate, but when she permitted a man, with whose name she was even unacquainted, to talk to her of love, to press her hands, and carry them to his lips, she forfeited her pretensions to discretion, and by condescending to grant his request of a second meeting, we tremble to pronounce, that she bid adieu to the only guards of her sex, prudence and delicacy ; the first specimen we have of her art, was turned against herself, and had Lord Greendale kept his appointment, and had his principals been
less

less strictly honourable than in reality they were, it would have infallibly effected her destruction. To meet him unattended by a female companion, she felt repugnant, she even feared, and very justly too, that such a step might be the means of lowering her in his estimation.

The hurt Mademoiselle had received the preceding day, prevented her from going out, and to trust any other person with the secret, was impossible, she therefore determined not to give him the meeting she had promised, at the same time cheated her own resolves, by pursuing her walk through the very path which he must take, and at the very hour in which she expected him; fortune was on this occasion more favourable to her than she deserved, it saved her from an interview with the Marquis, and presented to her his letter only, with the contents, of which she was more transported than it was possible she could have been by
the

the presence of the writer, having dismissed Jenkins with exactly the verbal message to his Lord, which was warmly solicited by his Lordship, and to which words he told her he should annex volumes of love's own eloquence, she ran back to the apartment of Mademoiselle Scuderie, and having first carefully fastened the door, forgetting all the charges her lover had given her to cherish his secret, she reposed it in the bosom of her confidant, whose agitation was very little inferior to her own. They continued reading the mysterious letter over and over so often, till every word it contained was impressed on their memories so forcibly, that nothing could blot it from thence, and the recourse they had to it daily, almost hourly, made such an omission as forgetfulness, a decided impossibility.

Already Miss Pladlow possessed by anticipation the rank of a Duchess, and Mademoiselle
did

did not fail to enumerate any advantage that must of course fall to her share in this splendid alliance; truth forces us to own, that if Ann's heart was at all touched by any other passion than ambition, the hurt was so slight, that she even did not feel it herself.

Lord Greendale was the first man who had spoke to her with particular tenderness; she thought it delightful, and without desiring to know more of the speaker, she wished to hear him talk to her again in the same language; this was really the state of her heart before she received the Marquis's letter, from which time she made herself believe, that she was as much in love with him as any heroine in romance could be with her hero; or even as the young ladies, of whom Mademoiselle had frequently told her, who thought no difficulty too great for them to encounter, which opposed their passage to the presence

sence of a lover, or that too many duties could be sacrificed to make him happy, and themselves miserable.

The only matter that could now distress the mind of Miss Pladlow, was the mystery of her lover's situation; and what could it be, was a question so often asked of herself and Mademoiselle, that like a feverish idea, waking or sleeping, it never forsook her, notwithstanding her intriguing confidant always assured her, that as soon as the Marquis was gone upon his travels, she would set about finding it out, and had already invented the means, which she said must be successful for finding out the truth of the matter; but as to the nature of the plan she had constructed, that was a secret she chose to hold in her own keeping, nor could all Miss Pladlow's importunities draw it from her.

C H A P. XXXI.

LADY Selina Dangle had given so just an account of her brother's strange conduct, after his return to town from Redberry, to her friend Lady Dorothy Petting, who had again so faithfully related it to Colonel Fairfax, that they have left nothing for us to say on that subject, except to explain the Marquis's reasons for chusing to appear what he was not, to his own family and to the world; a floven, a sot, a voluptuary, and a gambler, rather than what he was, elegantly exact, temperate,

rate, moderate in his pursuit of pleasure, and a strict disciplinarian in the school of honour.

Before he had seen Miss Pladlow he had contrived, by his own diligence, in avoiding temptation, to keep his heart disengaged, knowing his father had taken care to engage his person, and was resolved to fulfil his part of the contract, or rather family compact, at some future period, that is to say, when he could find no possible means to protract it; but if he was inclined to put off the dreaded event to a limited distance, and only repined that it was not in his power to make it unlimited, prior to this accidental rencounter with the all-conquering Ann; to whom he had submitted with the impetuosity of a first impression; being under the influence of so head-strong a passion; what became of his dutiful resolves, to make good, at one time or other, the family engagement, every

every idea of the sort was discarded, never to be resumed; and how to get it effectually dissolved now occupied every thought, that he could draw off from the contemplation of his absent divinity.

Lord Greendale too well knew the Duke of Angrave's insatiate avarice, to build the least hope of his relinquishing the prospect of possessing Miss Palmerston's fortune, which would have been equally pleasing to his Grace had the Lady herself been quite out of the question: Besides the heavy forfeiture he must be subject to if his son married any other woman, was such a bar to the gratification of the Marquis's wishes, as he saw but one way to surmount, which was to impose himself on her guardians for a dissolute, abandoned profligate, who was totally unworthy of an alliance with their ward, and to tire out the patience of his affianced wife by his unremitting coldness and de-

cided neglect, till the whole party should be agreed to loosen the galling chains by which his freedom was fastened down, and in consideration of Miss Palmerston's future happiness, he even expected she and her guardians would be the first parties to propose an amicable dissolution of the hated contract, if he could but be happy enough to make himself an object of disgust to the one, and of contempt to the other. The plan was laid before he quitted Redberry, and before he had written to Miss Pladlow the letter, which has already appeared; but though it was carried into execution with spirit, and followed up with intrepidity, though it was a stratagem so wonderfully well concerted between him and his faithful Jenkins, who he had pressed into the service, yet the success of it did not answer his purpose. The false accounts of his conduct ingeniously contrived to circulate from every quarter of the town, drew on him the disap-

disapprobation of his family, the condemnation of many, and the censure of all, except only the guardians of Miss Palmerston, who silently passed over in the Marquis of Greendale, heir apparent to his Grace the Duke of Angrave, such imputed actions of folly and extravagance, as, had they fallen on any other character, those grave and wise gentlemen would undoubtedly have been the very first to arraign and reprobate; but contrarywise, they were not only themselves indulgent to his Lordship's imaginary improprieties, they also disposed their manageable ward to disbelieve them intirely, nay even to discredit the evidence of her own senses, which had told her a thousand times she was an object of disgust to her intended husband, and their language might have been understood, but for the crafty and flattering insinuations of those very gentlemen who might have been the friends of her

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her fortune, but were most certainly the enemies to her peace.

Disappointed, yet not in despair, at the vast sums of reputation he had squandered in the pursuit of freedom, without having made the smallest progress towards its attainment, he departed from England, firmly fixed to proceed in his plans of deception, not only whilst he continued abroad, but to the end of his life, if he should not in less time have the good fortune to make himself hated by Miss Palmerston, and her incorrigible guardians. He had no pity to bestow on those who had plunged him into misery, if they should suffer by the only means he could use to extricate himself from it; but when he thought of the grief his masqued conduct would occasion Dr. Pladlow, he felt it as an aggravation of his own distresses, it was necessary he should be deceived with all the rest of the world; but the

VOL. III. C wounds

wounds he knew it would give his tranquillity was a dagger in his own soul.

When, at the urgent solicitations of the Duke of Angrave, Dr. Pladlow consented to travel with his beloved pupil, he found no difficulty in persuading Ann of the necessity there was that they should again be separated. She was returned to her father, and presided as mistress of his house, at the time a letter from his Grace arrived at Redberry, conveying the most brilliant proposals, which might have had no weight with the Doctor, whose wealth was already more than equal to his moderate wishes; but what he would have refused to selfish considerations, he granted to gratitude, and the warm intreaties of his benefactor.

Miss Pladlow could with difficulty conceal the joy her father's determination had given her, because she looked upon the request, though made by the Duke;

to originate in the Marquis, as was really the case, and regarded it as a tacit proof of the steadiness of his Lordship's attachment to herself. Her lips, indeed, expressed sorrow, but her heart revelled in all the delights of expected gratifications. She intreated her father's permission to remain at his house during the time he was absent, as, after having lived several months at home with him, she should feel very great reluctance to her former residence; for though Mrs. Parkington was one of the best women in the world, the school, she must confess, had no charms for her, having acquired from her dear father such a taste for the enchanting luxuries of quiet retirement, as she could not but hope she should never be obliged to relinquish as long as she lived.

Charmed with the rational sentiments of his darling daughter, the transported, alas! we are sorry to say, deceived parent, tenderly

embraced her. His eyes glistened with tears of satisfaction, and he assured her he should readily grant her request, and settle on her a handsome establishment, if they could think of any good kind of matronly woman who would accept the office of her companion ; for he did not hold it proper that so young a woman should be left intirely to her own management, and he would make it worth the while of any such person to live intirely with her at Redberry during his absence. He stopped here, and being arrived at the very point to which she had wished to conduct him, with glowing cheeks and sparkling eyes, she ventured to ask him what he should think of Mademoiselle Scuderie, to whose care of her she was already so much indebted, supposing they could prevail on her to reside at Redberry, and Mrs. Parkinson, she dare say, would consent to give her up for so friendly a purpose.

Say,

Say, child, replied the Doctor, quite as much delighted as Ann appeared to be, though, perhaps, not so much as she really was, I say that I like your proposition so well, that I will immediately wait on both the Ladies, and it shall not be my fault if I do not bring you back Mademoiselle Scuderie for your companion. It is impossible that I should not approve the original of those good qualities, which I every day see so brightly reflected in my own dear Ann.

Miss Pladlow threw her arms round the neck of this tender approving parent, and hid her face on his bosom; it was an involuntary action to conceal the guilty blush with which it was overspread, and not what he believed it to be, the artless emotion of filial fondness.

There could be no fear of a refusal on the part of Mademoiselle, and tho' Mrs. Parkington, whose eyes had never been opened to her real character, was sorry, and found it in-

convenient to part with so principal an assistant, yet did she resign to her good friend, Dr. Pladlow, the precious hypocrite, who carried her away with him, very much advanced in his estimation, by the number of tears that followed the adieus she received from the mistress herself, and all her scholars, on quitting their society.

We desire our readers will not look on the little sketch of incidents, that we have introduced, as a regular history of Lord Greendale; it is only meant to convey an explanation of the events that had appeared mysterious in his life before the commencement of our memoirs, and necessary to their further continuation; as well as to shew the causes from whence they had arisen, which being our only view, we avoid entering into the minutiae of circumstances, and confine ourselves to such only as are absolutely necessary to their information, and our own design.

From

From the time Dr. Pladlow left England with his pupil, Ann's little heart beat higher and higher with the pulse of impatience to come at the grand secret, and Mademoiselle, who had promised so largely, was every day importuned to set about making the discovery of what it could be; but having nestled herself into a very comfortable situation, having a carriage at her command (for the Doctor had sent down a second-hand charriot for the use of his daughter) and, being Lady Paramount of the mansion, she was in no haste to quit all these good things, even for a few weeks, to go in quest of adventures: However, from time to time she promised and re-promised, broke and re-broke her word, till the sweetness of Miss Pladlow's temper began to turn acid, and her endeavors to please, coax, and entertain her companion, were so visibly abated, in consequence of Mademoiselle's everlasting excuses, that, fearing she should lose her whole interest,

where it was so materially for her advantage to preserve it, she, at the end of ten months, sat out for London, leaving her beautiful charge, as had been agreed between them, making a visit, self-invited, to Mrs. Parkington, to whom she had signified a request that she might be permitted to remain with her till Mademoiselle's return, who pretended to have had a legacy from some friend in France, which was to be settled in London, and made her absence from Redberry indispensibly necessary, though she hoped to accommodate her business in a fortnight at farthest. Mrs. Parkington was happy to receive so distinguished a proof of Miss Pladlow's kindness. She gave her the most affectionate welcome, and warmly congratulated Mademoiselle on her unexpected good fortune, observing that she had never heard her mention any friend to whom she looked forward in the way of benefit from survivorship.

The

The confusion which his Grace of Angrave, and the younger branches of his family, had been thrown into on account of the wonderful alteration in the appearance, manner and conduct, of Lord Greendale, after his return to town from Redberry, had not yet subsided, nor had the tongue of slander wearied itself in propagating the suppositious enormities, of which report had accused him, and for this simple reason, that, by his Lordship's spirited contrivances, he found fuel as well abroad as at home, to feed the fires of his own kindling, so that scarce a letter from any person of consequence was written from Italy to England, but it came freighted with some report or other, not at all to the advantage of his character, though very much to the forwarding his own deep-laid plans of operation. The careful Duke could find no consolation but in reflecting that, amongst all his son's extravagance, he had never been so mad as to even hint that he would
 all denied down C of and ever renounce

renounced his pretensions to Miss Palmerston, and in the possession of her fortune he discovered the very elixir of life, and a healing balm for all his other grievances. Indeed, to have seen his prudent Grace in conversation with the heiress, or her guardians, the keenest penetration could not have found out that he was in any manner aggrieved; on the contrary, if we might credit his own looks, and his own words, on those occasions, he was the most happy of fathers, and his dear Green-dale the most exemplary of sons.

After all the pains taken by the Marquis to establish a very different fame, and to the attainment of which he had sacrificed the shadow of many noble qualities, preserving only their substance, as the companions of his bosom, could fortune in her most whimsical humour, have played him a more malicious trick than that of carrying a good report into a family where an evil one would have done so much better. His

Grace,

Grace, on this subject, and in this society, was rather more than animated. He was very often quite transported, particularly after the receipt of a vexatious letter from Dr. Pladlow, of some foolish, mad, or vicious action that had been promulgated to the world through the channel of report; then it was that his intended daughter, Sir Arthur White, and Mr. Anthony Pearce, was sure to receive the honour of a visit from his Grace; and then it was that his Grace would most exert himself, and with almost supernatural eloquence, elaborately describe his son as possessing those very perfections, which the hour before he had bewailed the loss of in his private cabinet, with curses and imprecations: Thus were both Duke and Marquis involved in scenes of deception; the former with much more success than the latter, as was explained in the smiles of Miss Palmerston, as well as in the low bows of Sir Arthur White, and his colleague,

league, Mr. Anthony Pearce, who both as fervently wished to be deceived, as the Duke wished to deceive them. Ah! poor Marquis, rather than be the subject of praise to those gentlemen, it would have been far more grateful to thy modest pretensions, had they chose to have debated amongst themselves which of the two was blackest; your Lordship or Lucifer.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXXII.

MADAME Villeroy was retained in the Duke of Angrave's family, after the marriage of Lady Margaret Devero, to finish the education of Lady Selina, or rather, as her domestic companion, which was not a very troublesome employment, as, after she had turned the corner of sixteen, she spent less time in her father's house than at any other house within the large circle of her visitation.

Lady Selina coming home very late, on more properly speaking very early from a ball,

ball, parting at her own door from Lady Margaret, who had that night been her chaperon, she was surprised to find Madame Villeroy waiting in her apartment. Heavens ! cried she, running up to the glass, in which she surveyed herself with more pleasure than, perhaps, she had inspired in any other bosom in the whole course of her dissipated hours, What is it I see ? Is it possible it can be you, Madame Villeroy ? I thought you had been in bed these ten hours ; but pray order me some wine and water, and make haste, for I have been dancing with four of the sweetest partners, and shall die with thirst if I have not got it this moment.

Madame Villeroy reproved her Ladyship with a smile, for what she was pleased to call her amiable impetuosity, and having humed away the attendant, who waited in the next room to get the wine and water with all possible expedition, she hoped her Ladyship,

Ladyship, having so many fine partners, had been very well entertained at the ball.

Oh! delightfully, you cannot think how I have been admired. I danced two dances with the Prince of Wales, and after that with the Lord knows who! Well, to be sure, you told me how handsome I looked before I went out, and I shall now believe you when ever you tell me so again. But what has been doing at home? Is there any letters or messages for me? Is my father come back from Sir Arthur's, or does he stay there to sleep with Miss Palmerston? Tell me all about it, for I am bursting with impatience. Lord! do you know that I really believe that brother of mine will get himself hung at last; they say he is in more scrapes than ever.

God

God forbid ! I hope your Ladyship has been misinformed ; I should be very sorry to believe every thing I hear.

And yet what every body says must be true ; in short, there is nothing else talked of.

But what do they say he has done now, my Lady ?

As to that I cannot possibly tell ; for just as Lady Augusta Drawl and Lady Charlotte Ogle had been explaining the whole matter to me as fast they could utter, so many fine men came about me, that I forgot every thing they had been saying, except that George was very near being killed in a duel.

O, mon Dieu ! O mon Dieu ! And did his Lordship fight ?

Why,

Why, no ; I think they said he did not fight, but that he had intended it, which is, in fact, exactly the same thing : But what have you heard ? for it is now your turn to speak : I have told you all my news.

And I have news for your Ladyship ; but first drink your wine and water ; then turning to her Ladyship's woman, she bid her go to bed, for that she meant to stay, and undress Lady Selina, who was then sitting at her toilet, and had opened her eyes half an inch wider, and fixed them on Madame Villeroy's face, that she might not lose a word of her intelligence ; and as soon as they were alone she begged to know what it was, declaring she hated to be kept in suspense, and was sure it was good news, or she would not look so pleasant, or have sat up so late to tell it her.

Your

Your Ladyship is in the right, replied Madame Villeroy, for it is always good to discover the contrivances of cunning people, who make mischief in great families, and turn them upside down. For my part I never liked that sanctified old hypocrite, Dr. Pladlow, in all my life. I thought what all his boasted honour and honesty would come to.

Here the violence of her displeasure against the doctor was, by the recollection of former pains taken in vain, raised to so great a magnitude, that she was actually forced to pause, merely from want of breath to proceed, whilst Lady Selina exclaimed, Lord! is it only about that old figure you mean to tell me? Why, the least thing that I expected to have heard was, that the charming Duke of B— had been to demand me of my father; but you are for ever raising one's expectations, and for ever disappointing them, and then, very peevishly

peevishly added, Pray, Madame Villeroy, let the frightful Doctor's odious name be henceforth banished from our toilet conversations.

But suppose, my Lady, he should be at the bottom of all my Lord Marquis's intrigues ?

Ah ! dear, good Villeroy, if you have any stories of that sort they must be entertaining, and, with all my heart, I give you leave to tell them. How can he intrigue for my brother ? No, no, it must be for himself, and the very idea is so ridiculous, that it will kill me with laughing, so make haste, and tell me how it was, and all about it.

If your Ladyship will but have patience, and not interrupt me, I shall tell you such a tale as you have not heard these seven years.

years ; but you must be quite silent, or I shall forget half of it.

Mum, cried the little lively Lady, laying her fingers on her lips, and humourously resting her two elbows on the table, Well, will you begin now ? said she ; I am quite ready for his intriguing reverence.

I wish it was nothing worse, my Lady ; gallantry and intriguing, as the world goes, is so fashionable an offence, that it would not have been worth my while to have meddled with it ; but when a man is taken into such a family as my Lord Duke's, and is appointed governor to his eldest son, the immediate heir of his Grace's magnificent house ; and when such a man has a young flirt of a daughter, who he has never mentioned in the family that support him, not even to the governess of his Lord's sisters, whose consequence is at least equal to his own ; but smuggles his fine Madam, and
brings

brings her up in a band-box till he finds an opportunity to let her lose upon his pupil, in hopes to make her a Duchefs.

It is not in nature to be silent any longer, cried Lady Selina, interrupting her, what, in the name of a goose, are you talking about?

Mon Dieu! will nothing make your Ladyship serious?

Yes, replied she, yawning; your story of Dukes, Marquises, Governors, Governesses, and Duchesses, have made me so stupid, that I must go to bed and sleep it off. Lord! if it is not half after seven. Dear Madame Villeroy take off my things as fast as you can, and we will talk about it as early as you please to-morrow morning, so I desire you will awake me at four o'clock, dead or alive; saying which she began tearing the ornaments out

out of her hair with her accustomed velocity, and Madame perceiving her eyes were gone a day's march into her head, saw it was in vain to contend the point, did as she was bid, a thing not unusual to this commodious gentlewoman, and retired to her own room, carrying in her disappointed heart hatred, malice, and all sorts of uncharitableness, for Dr. Pladlow and his daughter Ann.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXXIII.

MADAME Villeroy had that very evening received the honor of a visit from Mademoiselle Scuderie, who when she told Miss Pladlow she would find out what it could be, or in other words the secrets of Lord Greendale, had no other engine in view by which it was possible to work out her grand design, but Madame Villeroy, her country woman, with whom she had formerly been in the habits of intimacy, and to whose recommendation she stood indebted for her station with Mrs. Parkington, of course for the still more eligible one

one of which that had been productive; as soon therefore as she arrived in town, and had taken a genteel lodging, she sent her footman, for she was attended very lady-like by a male and female servant, with a card to her old friend, signifying her intentions of waiting on Madame Villeroy that evening, if she happened to be disengaged.

The poverty in which Madame recollected to have seen Mademoiselle some years before, was so strong at the moment she received the message, as to make her almost forget the lady herself, but enquiring of the Porter who it was that had brought the card, and being told a footman in a very handsome livery, who said he belonged to Mademoiselle Scuderie, she returned another equally polite and sincere, expressing her happiness at being at home and alone, and how very impatient she was to see her.

to see her old friend, for whom she had cherished the most particular esteem, and the consequence of this interchange of messages was, that the two ladies met at nine o'clock, and sat discoursing together till within half an hour of Lady Selina's return from the ball.

It might have been a controvertible argument to have held out for ages and generations, which of these two french ladies was the compleatest mistress of arts, if the contrivances of this one evening had not clearly decided in favor of Madame, who dexterously lightened Mademoiselle of her secret, without giving one of her own to strike the balance, by which means her volatile country woman was forced to kick the beam, though in justice to her long established fame, we are obliged to confess this was the very first contest of the kind in which she had been worsted.

Mademoiselle had no idea that any person in the Duke's family, particularly Madame Villeroy, could be unacquainted with the circumstance of Doctor Pladlow's having a daughter; and when in the beginning of their conversation, she casually mentioned her comfortable situation with that young Lady, and was prodigal in praise of her beauty, Madame Villeroy, though bursting with rage, spleen and astonishment, managed her words, her voice and her looks, with so much address, that it was impossible Ann's confidant should find out her error, or discover that she had blundered most egregiously. When Mademoiselle fish'd for the family secret, the bait she used was very alluring, being certain parts of her own deposit, and Madame Villeroy, who saw the hook nibbled away, 'till she had swallowed all the good things about it, and then, not satisfied, by a thousand caresses, by professions of friendship, by promises of everlasting

secrecy,

secrecy, bound by the most solemn asseverations, and calling on all the saints in the Romish calender to witness, that her lips should never open upon the subject; in short, by one means and another, rubbing with the grain and against the grain, she had got at the very marrow of the business, and before they parted, Madame Villeroy had heard the Marquis of Greendale's letter to Miss Pladlow, word for word, repeated four times over by Mademoiselle Scuderie, who we must here remark, preferred good old Maderia wine to any that her own country produced; and when they parted, after mutually bestowing on each other a kiss on either cheek, she declared as plainly as she could speak, that she only wished to be a very great person, for the sake of having such wine always at her table.

Though in her conscience Madame Villeroy was convinced, by the Marquis's

letter, not only of the Doctor's innocence of his pupil's attachment to his daughter, but also that he was ignorant of their ever having seen or heard of each other, yet it was her pleasure to represent him as guilty of the whole affair, to Lady Selina, who having heard her to an end, as she sat by her bed-side, the next day was more eager to have an exact description given her of Miss Pladlow's person, the beauties of which had been brought forward, as a proof of the Doctor's duplicity, than to express surprise or anger; and being gratified on that point, she started up in the bed, and catching hold of Madame Ville-roy's hand, you must promise me, said she, two things, and I will give you five hundred pounds on the day I am married, and I have no notion of leading apes in Hell I'll assure you. We allow the word her Ladyship chose to use on this occasion, does not come gracefully from the lips of a female, and is particularly discordant, when

when uttered by females of fashion, but as we never shew a fault that will admit of an excuse, without attempting to excuse it, we must say in defence of Lady Selina, that in the hurry and bustle of her education, some trivial things were forgot, so that her knowledge being entirely confined to this charming world, she really did not understand there was more meaning in that particular word, than in any other monosyllable.

Notwithstanding the severity of our remark, Madame Villeroy saw nothing reprehensible, either in the promise itself, or the observation that followed it; on the contrary, being charmed with the *tout ensemble*, she laughed very heartily at the bandinage, and assured her Ladyship, with that sort of faith which self-interest has made so strong and binding, that it will wear and tear with any modern faith whatever, that she only waited to receive her Ladyship's commands,

mands, and would most punctually obey them.

You certainly are the best creature that ever was, said Lady Selina, and you must promise me not to speak a word about George, and this flirting Miss, to any body living; you and I will keep the secret snug to ourselves, for if my father should get hold of it, he will roar like a lion, and frighten every soul from the house; besides, he would be so disagreeably suspicious, it is ten to one but he might want to keep me at home, to prevent further mischief to his family, a fine business that would be; I don't know but it would provoke me to elope, and fly to Gretna-Green, for the benefit of liberty and fresh air: then as to Lady Margaret, I would not have her know it for ten thousand worlds, for she is so spiteful, so spleenish, and so cross, and since her plebian marriage, thinks me so much better off than herself, that she hates

me worse than any thing in nature, except her husband, and knowing how much it would vex me, she would never let the Duke alone, 'till she had brought him to curtail me of my innocent pleasures, which I am resolved never to part with, 'till I am as old as the Hills, and as ugly as a witch.

Ah, my sweet child, replied Madame Villeroy, pity you should ever be the first, but impossible you can be the last; no, no, your Ladyship is more likely to resemble my country woman, for whom the men were all mad, after she was ninety years of age; and I pray to all the saints you may live as long, and charm as long as she did.

Be it so, my dear obliging Madame Villeroy, but in the mean time, what shall we do with George's affair, his marriage with that trumpery girl must be prevented

ed, but then I would have it done as quietly as possible. Suppose we were to provide her with a husband from the canaille; no, that wont do, as the wretch we employ may betray us. I have read of one woman stealing away another, and hiding her in an old tatter'd down castle; but then, where is such a castle to be found; or suppose we write her a letter, and sign it her friend, Anonymous, just to frighten her with the Duke's resentment, and to inform her that George is already married.

Madame Villeroy declared she had no objection whatever to anonymous letters, on the contrary, they might be made very useful on particular occasions, and she had herself condescended more than once, to the office of writing them.

Have you indeed! cry'd Lady Selina?
my stars! what a charming creature; but
my

my dear Madame Villeroy, have you written any of them very lately?

Not since your sister has been married.

Lord! how agreeably you surprise me! you can't think how you oblige me, and how much better I love you for telling me every thing; so you used to write anonymous letters for Margaret?

I did not say so, my Lady.

That's true, but you said enough to make me distracted; I shall die if you do not tell me what they were about, for I know it could be for nobody else; ha! Madame Villeroy, pray, pray think me worthy of your confidence? come, you must tell me, indeed, indeed you must.

There is no resisting your amiable importunities; but Lady Margaret would

ruin me, if she knew I had mentioned the little bagatelle to you.

How can she know it? for I swear to you I will never tell her, was it to men or women you wrote?

Sometimes one, sometimes the other, for I see your Ladyship will let me keep nothing to myself; when any of her friends were going to be married, and she thought the husband was either too good or too bad for her friend, she and I together, for the joke sake, would cook up a letter, to assure the lady, it was a match of convenience on the gentleman's part, and that the writer had himself heard Lord such a one, or Mr. such a one (according to the distinction of the person concerned) turn into ridicule the ceremony of marriage, and not only that, but even her Ladyship, or Miss such a one, to whom he had the honor

honor of communicating this friendly intelligence, had been ridiculed by the same party on more occasions than one.

Delightful! exclaimed her transported Ladyship, dear Madame Villeroy, you must write some of those enchanting letters for me, as well as for my sister; and now I am quite sure something of this kind, though not exactly the same words, will do to unsettle the Marquis. Oh! I have got the charmingest thought just danced into this little noddle of mine; however, I wont say a word about it, 'till you have told me what other dear anonymous letters you have written to please Margaret.

Your Ladyship gives to my motive a mighty judicial explanation, for I never encouraged her in this sort of amusement, except as a reward for her application to study, and then I had pleasure in pleasing her.

D 6

Well,

Well, that is all very good, but will you let me expire with impatience for more of the letters.

Why, let me see, when Lord Benbridge was talked of for Miss Worthington, we had some diversion in letting the lover know, by the penny-post, that his intended wife might give him her hand, but that her heart belonged to another; it was all a matter of our own invention, merely to pass a cheerful hour in laughing at the thoughts of how his Lordship would receive our intelligence, but we never found that out, as the match broke off a few days after, but it is now time, said this complaisant governess, this rewarder of study, for your Ladyship to get up; in ten minutes the mantua-maker will be here with your cloaths for the birth-day, and if you are not ready to try them on, there is no hopes that she will wait.

My

My stars, cry'd Lady Selina, setting up
in the bed, pray ring for my woman, I
would not be disappointed of my beautiful
trimming for the universe.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXXIV.

P O O R Mademoiselle Scuderie returned to Redberry, after staying in town twelve days, the victim of disappointment, and the prey of ennui. She had left her secret behind her, and had brought back nothing in exchange, but liberal promises of future communication, if ever Madame Villeroy should find out any thing to the purpose, and more assurances of secrecy and fidelity than would have served a villain at his first introduction to a society of conspirators. Mademoiselle

moiselle was neither flattered by, or satisfied with them, being too deeply versed in the sort of art, by which she had herself been deceived, to give them much credit: but the deed was done, therefore all that she could do to help herself, was to keep her young charge in profound ignorance of the mischief she had made in her wrong headed journey to London, who forced to be content with her friends ill success, consoled her disappointed expectations by the enjoyment of present pleasures, and dreams of future grandeur; the former was nearly confined to the paying and receiving visits in her little neighbourhood, whilst to the latter, her busy imagination sat no bounds; she had also shewn herself twice at a race ball, during the first eighteen months of Lord Greendale's tour to the continent, and had raised no small flame in the hearts of almost as many men as dared to examine the beauties of a face, which could not be gazed at with impunity. Several

had

had applied for her favor, and for permission to address her father on the subject, but all were rejected; nor did the loss of their adoration in the least manner affect her with any thing like regret, except on one occasion.

Amongst her other admirers, was the Honorable Mr. Ashford, the eldest son of Lord Danzey, whose person was remarkably handsome, his heart good, his manners pleasing, and he possessed a very considerable fortune, independent of his father; his attachment to Ann, like that of Lord Greendale, had commenced at first sight, in the ardency of his passion, and his steadiness to persevere in the honorable gratification of it; he also very much resembled the Marquis, so that when she assured him, there was no hope of his succeeding, she saw him at her feet so truly wretched, and so interestingly pathetic, that she joined her tears with his, and for a moment paused between her promise to the Marquis,

quis, and the more tender inclinations she felt for his rival; an appearance so much in favor of the latter, aggravated her distress by increasing his importunities, and the only expedient she could think of to end his hopes and her own embarrass was candidly to tell him she had, without her father's knowledge, formed an engagement, which though she meant not to fulfil unauthorised by him, she would never retract from; he intreated she would not withhold the name and situation of him, that so cruelly impeded his felicity, but this she refused to do so positively, that he was forced to take what she insisted should be his eternal adieu, with no other gratification than reading in her tearful eye that he was not at least an object of her hatred.

Mr. Ashford's appearance in the neighbourhood of Redberry, had been merely accidental; his chief residence was in town; and he had not only the honor of being on
Lady

Lady Selina's list of acquaintance, but also on that of her favorite's; the first time she had ever met with him, was at the ball, from which her Ladyship returned just as Madame Villeroy and Mademoiselle Scuderie had separated after a trial of skill, in which, as we have already related, the latter was defeated; now although this famous contest happened eight months before that period to which we have now brought down our history, and notwithstanding Lady Selina Dangle was then so warm upon finding out ways and means to *unsettle* the Marquis, yet she had found so much to do in conducting her own plans of conquest, that whenever Madame Villeroy spoke to her of the necessity there was to finish her brother's business, and what she hoped would be equally fatal to the unoffending father, as to the aspiring daughter, her Ladyship always assured her there was no occasion to be in a hurry, for that George was not such a fool to marry,

marry, except to serve his family, and that he might do at any time by taking the stupid animal they had provided for him; she did not for her part believe he would come home these seven years, as all the Italian ladies were wild to attract his notice, and as to the parson's vulgar daughter going over to him, that was quite out of the question; another argument she would sometimes add, and declare that as he was to marry for the benefit of his family, she thought he had a right afterwards to please himself, and if he had set his heart on a bit of the church, it would be monstrous cruel to frighten the poor little tame damsel from being ready to receive the honor of his visits, when they could do no harm to himself, his ancestors, or his descendants.

Such liberal opinions we do not hold up to our fair readers for their example, we think it is safer to avoid them, however wide,

wide, by so doing, they may steer from the coast of fashion.

The first time Lady Selina saw Mr. Ashford after he had made a surrender of his heart to the all-captivating Ann, her Ladyship perceived a great alteration in his face, and a still greater in his spirits, the one was pale and much thinner than usual, the other considerably below par; she first jested, then consoled him, was sure he was either mad, sick or in love, begged his pardon the next moment, was convinced he must be very seriously ill, and wished him to consult his physician; she wanted to know where he had been, who he had seen, and what could have happened to cause such a deplorable alteration in his looks and humour, in the short three weeks he had been absent from the circles she frequented; many leading questions were sent out to gain intelligence, but being always unsuccessful on their errand,

errand, she at length found the means to satisfy her curiosity, not by any new discovery, but the very old method of employing her woman to get it out of his servant, with whom Mrs. Abigail was particularly well acquainted, having often been Mr. Jerry's partner at their assemblies of high life below stairs.

Being once assured that the influence of Miss Pladlow's charms had extended even beyond the heart of that infatuated fool her brother, as on the present occasion she emphatically called him, but that she had also dared to engross one of the finest young men about town, who was not her brother; that she had enthralled him, fettered him, and altogether so totally spoil'd him, that it would not now be worth the while even of a second rate beauty, or a disappointed coquet to set her cap at him. At all those heavy charges, her Ladyship's

ship's anger against the beautiful offender rose with so great violence, that in the first emotions of her rage she would have discovered the Marquis's whole affair to the Duke, had she not again considered, that after having sat the house in a blaze, the wings of her own freedom might be scorched, and perhaps her dearest pleasures, perish in the flame.

It was now that she was no longer inattentive to the constant pleadings of Madame Villeroy, to perpetrate the mischief that had been eight months in training, and the copies of two letters were instantly produced by the fertile brain of Lady Selina, both exquisite in their kind, which when transcribed by her ready assistant, were immediately dispatched, one to Italy, the other to Redberry; the first anonymous, to inform the Marquis as in friendship to Dr. Pladlow, that his daughter
was

was using all sorts of arts to seduce every young man of fashion that chance threw in her way, and that her character was so light it would be all blown to ratters, if he did not take her up in time, and order her into immediate confinement, where it was the writer's opinion she ought to be fed on bread and water, that being afraid such intelligence abruptly conveyed to the worthy Doctor might too sensibly afflict him. A female friend who was advanced in years, and lived in the neighbourhood of Redberry, had taken this method, in hopes his Lordship would so far interest himself in the good gentleman's misfortunes, as to soften the account of them, as much as circumstances would permit.

The other letter her ladyship also indited, and Madame Villeroy was requested to give it the best flourish she could of a masculine pen, which that Lady was very

proud to obey, being both charmed and flattered with the talents of her young pupil, whom she regarded as a looking glass, in which all her own ingenuity was advantageously reflected.

What were the contents of this letter, and what strange effects they produced, our readers may know if they will take the trouble to follow us to Redberry.

Miss Pladlow and Mademoiselle Scuderie, were, as usual, building castles in the air, the most uncertain and unprofitable business in the world, because it so seldom happens, that the builder inhabits his own edifice.

The season was March, the weather boisterous, and the evening far advanced, when a servant who had been sent to the post town, returned with two letters, one foreign, the other stamped with the Lon-

don post mark. Having first opened that which she knew to be from her father, and which, like all his other epistles, was short and sweet, she next looked at the seal and directions of that which lay before her on the table, having given the Doctor's letter to Mademoiselle for her inspection.

Well! cry'd Ann, was ever any thing so odd, this is certainly a coronet seal, but so clumsily press'd, that it is almost defaced, and the letter is free too, but the name is so badly written, that I cannot make it out.

Open it then, said her friend, but stop a moment, and let me look before you break the wax; she examined it carefully, and though her broad cheeks were as red before as rouge could make them, when she saw enough of the arms and coronet to know they belonged to the house of

Angrave, and perceived it to be really his Grace's name on the back of the letter, at that moment the very palest spots on her countenance were those which the daubing hand of art had laid on; so much higher is the colouring of nature, than that of art, when guilt holds the pencil; she immediately thought her confident, Madame Villeroy, must have betrayed her, and foresaw the destruction of all her hopes, in the ruin of Miss Pladlow's prospects; but in the midst of her internal and external confusion, she was too cunning to blow her own coal; she concealed her palpitations with all possible address, gave back the letter to Ann, and declared she could not conceive who it came from. We need not here observe, that though the Duke of Angrave's name and seal had been used on the occasion, he had no share in the merit of composition, the whole of it belonged to Lady Selina and Madame Villeroy, who had taken the liberty to borrow both the one and the other, without his

his Grace's permission or knowledge. These were the contents, and being the invention of an exasperated beauty, we may venture to pronounce, that the want of energy is not to be numbered amongst any other critical deficiencies, to which such sort of productions are sometimes liable.

LETTER.

Audacious wretch ! would nothing satisfy thy diabolical ambition, but to connect thy obscurity with the honors of my princely house ; shall the daughter of a preaching puppy of a parson lift up her daring eyes to the Duke of Angrave's heir, as a husband fit to couple with her meanness ; know, infamous creature, he would have sufficiently degraded himself, had he given thee the title of his mistress, and I would have spurned him with my foot, for having derogated from the dignity of his ancestors, by a choice so spiritless ; know you not,

woman, the mistress of Lord Greendale should be the wife or daughter of a peer. Now hear thy fate, and tremble ; I command thee in three days to depart from Redberry, and to hide thy infamous head where it shall never be seen to disgrace my family ; go to the mountains in Wales, and may they cover thee eternally ; dare to disobey the least of my commands at thy peril ! take only the vile Scuderie for thy companion ; neither directly or indirectly dare to tell where that abode lies, to which I banish thee for thy audacity ; the moment thy father is informed of my just resentment, I will crush him to atoms, and bring thee to public execution, for practising the sins of witchcraft. My messengers shall be at Redberry in three days, either to see that my orders have been obeyed, or to drag thee to the awful presence of the enraged

ANGRAVE.

The

The consequence of this thundering mandate, after poor Ann was relieved from a fainting fit, into which it had thrown her; and when she had recovered her speech, that was for a long time obstructed by heart rending sobs, and rivers of briny tears, was a sudden but fixed resolution to leave Redberry the next morning at day break, as privately as possible; to pursue her route for Liverpool, and from thence embark for the nearest port to her father's residence, which was then in Rome, to throw herself at his feet, confess her errors, claim his protection, renounce Lord Greendale, and ever after to be good and dutiful. Nor did Mademoiselle oppose any of her intentions, being still more afraid, even than her fair friend, to stay where she was, and flattering her concealed hopes, for she no longer dared to communicate them, that the Marquis would certainly marry Miss Pladlow, when he should be told what she had suffered on his account.

They passed that night in making preparations for their journey and voyage; but as we do not mean to attend them on either, we shall set them down at the close of their dangers and fatigues by sea and by land, one short street only from that in which Lord Greendale's house was situated. Miss Pladlow understood a little of Italian, but Mademoiselle spoke it with tolerable fluency, having passed some years, in the beginning of her eventful life, in his Holiness's dominions.

Ann had never once varied from those good resolutions she had carried with her from Redberry, and alighted at a public hotel with no other view than to refresh herself, that she might have strength to meet her father, and to concert on the least alarming method, by which she might acquaint him of her arrival.

Amongst

Amongst the crowd curiosity had collected together, to see the ladies get out of their carriage, fortune had so contrived it, that Jenkins should be almost one of the nearest to them ; he had been sent with a message from the Marquis to a friend of his, who lodged at the hotel, which he had just delivered, and was returning through the court when the carriage drove up. Mademoiselle alighted first ; her figure so ill rewarded the trouble he had taken, that he was actually turning away, when he accidentally caught a glimpse of Miss Pladlow's side face, as one of the attendants was lifting her out in his arms, being so overcome with fatigue and terror, that she could not walk to the house ; transient as the view was, and the improbability that she should be in that place, the appearance staggered him extremely, he thought it impossible it should be her, but the Lady he had seen, so strongly reminded him of her lovely face, that he went back into the

E 4

house,

house, puzzled, anxious and uneasy; he asked a thousand questions, but could get no satisfactory answer; all that the people at the hotel knew themselves they very readily told him; but this all amounted to nothing more than that both the ladies were foreigners, but they did not know from what country; that one of them was very young and beautiful; that she wept much, had not spoken a word, but in so low a whisper to her companion, that they had not even heard the sound of her voice. He intreated to see the baggage that had been taken off the carriage; he examined every part of it; he looked round and round, but could see nothing like a direction on any part of it.

Whilst thus employed with the trunks, bundles and boxes that had been put down just outside the room in which the ladies were sitting, a waiter passed by him, carrying refreshments to them; he followed him

him to the door, and in the same moment it was open, he had so good a view of Miss Pladlow's face and figure, as at once to convince him, that it could be no other than the beloved object of his Lord's affection.

Confused with the multitude of his own ideas, at the wonderful discovery he had made, he rather flew than ran back with his intelligence to the Marquis, who was waiting for his return, that he might dress to fulfil an evening engagement. Jenkins thrown off his guard by the suddenness of the scene that had passed at the hotel, broke it with so much abruptness to his Lord, who happened to be alone, that the effects it had on his Lordship, were really of an alarming nature, he turned pale, staggered, and fell back on a chair, which he had just risen from, almost without sense or motion. No being could have a stronger claim to compassion, than

the faithful creature, whose precipitation had reduced him to this condition; he threw himself on his knees before him, he clasp'd the Marquis's hands in his own, eagerly called upon him for pardon, begging for the love of God he would speak to him, that he might not have to reflect, it was he who had been the murderer of his Lord, his friend, his benefactor.

No, Jenkins, cry'd the Marquis, who was recovering from the violence of a shock he had not been able to withstand. No, no, no, it is not you that have killed me, but if Miss Pladlow has given her hand to another, and has followed her husband hither, it is she that has destroyed me; this must be the fatal cause of her appearance at Rome: to come under any other protection, would be still more shocking to my feelings, and destructive to my peace.

I do

I do not think, my dear Lord, replied the now comforted Jenkins, that Miss Pladlow is under any man's protection, no man was with her, upon my honor, not even a male attendant.

Then I will soon know the occasion of her arrival, and snatching up his hat, he bounced off like a rocket, followed at a respectful distance by the humble friend of his misfortunes; and here it will not be unseasonable to observe that the anonymous and joint productions of his sister Lady Selina Dangle, and Madame Villeroy, had reached him exactly five days prior to that on which the penitent Ann made her *entre* into the capital of his magnificent Holiness, and though he had cursed the officious intermedler, and treated the letter itself as all people of common sense should treat such sort of incendiary compositions with sovereign contempt, stamped it beneath his feet, and afterwards flung it into

the flames, yet when he was told the beloved subject of that letter was actually in Rome, and that she was come without the command or knowledge of her father, he had ten thousand ideas floating on his disturbed imagination, any one of which was sufficiently baneful to blast the fairest blossom of his distant hopes.

Jenkings conducted his Lord to the door of the room where he had left the ladies, and retired; the Marquis opened it so gently that the noise did not disturb them, he saw his Divinity, his limbs trembled, his breath almost forsook him, and his feet seemed rooted to the floor; to him the moment was critical, it was the most awful he had ever experienced; had the eternal sentence which was to pronounce him happy or miserable depended on that moment, his terrors were adequate to the occasion.

Ma-

Mademoiselle had fallen asleep in her chair, and was enjoying that sort of canine repose, to the solace of which the sons and daughters of sensibility must ever remain strangers, whilst sorrow is the attendant on their couch; but neither sorrow, remorse, or disappointments, could penetrate the heart, or break the slumbers of this snoring french woman, or awaken her to a participation of those sufferings poor Ann would probably never have experienced, but for her own arts and her own treachery; her eyes were closed to the distresses of her victim, and her ears to the voice of the lovely complainer, whose sobs and tears as she sat writing to her father in one corner of the room, with her face turned from the door, melted the soul of Lord Greendale to indescribable softness, might have taught compassion to the Hyæna, but had no effect on the self-loving Mademoiselle Scuderie.

We

We are not expected, it is hoped, to be very minute in our descriptions, but should it be otherwise, we will endeavour to preserve a medium between the wishes of our readers, and our own inclinations, by telling them in few words that Miss Pladlow had on a very becoming travelling dress of light blue lutestring, with a hat and feathers of exactly the same colour, which she had either taken off before the Marquis stole upon her unperceived, or what is still more likely from its lying on the ground, was, that it had good naturedly fallen off, that the finest hair in the world might be wholly unfettered, and give an air of ease to the dignity of beauty, by straying in careless ringlets over the snowy forehead, the polished bosom, and the graceful shoulders of the enchanting Ann, the tears fell faster from her eyes than the words from her pen, sighs and sobs retarded the progress of her undertaking; at last, in a fit of despair, she tore the paper on
SW which

which she had been writing, and wringing her hands in agony, cried out, What can I say! What can I do! What will become of me! Cruel Duke! Cruel Lord Greendale!

To hear his name announced in accents so reproachful, so plaintive, produced an immediate effect. The heart stricken Marquis no longer stationed as the unobserved spectator of her emotions, was now at the feet of his adored mistress, who had so little remembrance of his person, that she gave a faint scream, and in very bad Italian bid him be gone, having no other idea but that he must be an assassin, who had been employed by the implacable Duke of Angrave to take away her life; this was an error under which he did not suffer her to remain an instant, and the explanation threw her into still more violent agitation than had arisen from the apprehension of death itself, she insisted that
he

he should leave her, he was deaf to her commands, they both became more composed, he seated himself by her, she told him the motives for her leaving Redberry, the resolution she had taken on receipt of his father's letter, and intreated his Lordship's influence to obtain pardon of her dear abused parent for the past faults in her conduct, and to assure him in her name she had renounced them for ever.

The Marquis was disconcerted, not so much at the resolution she had taken to desert him, because he well knew that in such cases ladies' resolutions are not always immutable; but he was piqued, grieved, almost offended by the little interest she seemed to take in the affliction with which she was coolly stabbing the hopes he had so long and so affectionately cherished, he looked at her, he examined her face with the eyes of passionate fondness the whole time she was speaking; but alas! no tender glance, no friendly

friendly blush told him he was beloved, and that to renounce him for ever, would cost her a few moments of sorrow! the contents of the letter which had frightened her from her peaceful home were so engraved on her memory that she was able very faithfully to relate them to the Marquis, which were so like what his father would have written on such an occasion, that he had no cause to suspect there had been any deception used in regard to its authenticity; the original she could not then shew him, having for security locked it up in her trunk, which would not be opened till the next day, when she promised him he should see it.

Having listened to the tale of her misfortunes, as well as to all she could advance in favor of her present determination, and finding her so much exhausted that she could proceed no farther, he took advantage of her silence, and thus addressed her

her in a voice that was at once gentle, soothing, persuasive, urgent, firm and determined.

That I adore you, my dear Miss Pladlow, is not more demonstrated to my own soul than that you behold me with indifference, yet it is not you that I accuse, it is myself that I condemn, I have occasioned you nothing but misery, when I meant, as heaven is my witness, to secure your felicity, how then should I expect love where my wretched fortune has made me appear to merit hatred only, my situation has been dreadfully embarrassed, engagements have been formed for me in which I was never consulted, these engagements my family may still think binding, but I know they are redeemable, I cancel them from this moment, and to-morrow shall see me your husband, or—

Stop,

Stop, stop, interrupted the affrighted Ann, I never, never can be the wife of Lord Greendale, is he not son to the Duke of Angrave; name it not, you kill me with terror, restore me to my father's love, give me back to his protection; and——

Idol of my soul, cried the Marquis, stopping her in his turn, yes, by heaven I will restore you to your father, he shall receive you with all that boundless transport with which your husband shall lead you to him, do not turn pale, do not tremble, I will not alarm you, but suffer me calmly to explain my intentions.

But I cannot, replied she, with a peevish sort of expression, I cannot marry the son of a man, so cruel, so hard-hearted as the Duke of Angrave.

It would be endless to repeat the rest of this interesting conversation, which lasted

lasted upwards of two hours, suffice it to say, that at the end of that time, Lord Greendale had gained something like a victory, though by no means adequate to his wishes, as it was but too apparent, she yielded to fear what she would not have granted to his fervent importunities, for whatever she had to dread in her father's reception of her, merely as his daughter, was swallowed up in the contemplation that he would certainly embrace her with joy as the Marchioness of Greendale; in this state of mind, half consenting and half reluctant to his Lordship's return the next morning, with a proper officiator to make them one, she saw him depart, unmoved by any other agitation than what was produced by her own timidity, her fears only extended to her present situation, she forgot the Duke's threats, in the Marquis's promises of tender and eternal protection, her heart too was grateful to the latter, she did not love him yet, but she had

no

no doubt that she should love him to-morrow, and then very naturally thought what would Mr. Ashford say when he heard that she was actually married.

Soon after she had parted from the Marquis she awakened Mademoiselle Scuderie, it is impossible to describe the madness of her exultation at being told all that had passed during her state of oblivion, her boisterous joy had all the appearance of inebriety, she fell to her old trade of castle building with more alacrity than ever, and defied the rudest blast of fortune again to tumble down her works; whilst Ann, though neither so much elated, or so happy, was at least more contented than she had ever been since the receipt of the supposed letter from his Grace the Duke of Angrave.

C H A P. XXXV.

WHEN the Marquis left Miss Pladlow at the Hotel, he went from thence in pursuit of a clerical gentleman, the travelling governor of an English Nobleman then at Rome, and having found him he, with many persuasions, prevailed on the reverend divine to give him the nuptial benediction the next morning at the hour of eleven.

The name of his intended bride he carefully concealed, and the place of her retreat; but it was agreed that the Marquis should

should call the following day, and conduct him to it. Before that time arrived, the divine had taken it into his serious consideration, that the office he had engaged to perform, might be attended with many inconveniences to himself, and he thought, by giving Dr. Pladlow a peep into the business, he should get rid of all personal hazard ; if he proceeded the odium would fall more on the Doctor than himself, and if any step was taken to prevent the marriage by acting cautiously, he should get his neck out of the collar, and never appear to have forfeited the confidence of Lord Greendale, being one of those accommodating beings, whose ambition is to be equally well with fathers and sons, who do not happen to be well with each other.

This prudent man lost no time in seeking out the Doctor, who was thunder-struck at the intelligence, which, under the

seal of secrecy, strongly impressed, he communicated to him. The Lady's country, family, fortune, endowments, or even in what house she resided, was unknown to himself, of course he could give no information concerning them; but, in order to get at the latter, he put it into the Doctor's head how easy it would be to have them dodged, when the Marquis called to take him to the bride-house at eleven the next morning, and, having settled it in the best manner they could, the prudent man retired, and left the good man to dispose of himself as he thought proper.

Doctor Pladlow neither took off his cloaths, or laid himself down the live-long night; nor did he even rest his weary limbs on a chair, whilst his feeble legs could support him in traversing his chamber. A thousand times he measured it in length, in breadth, and from corner to corner, as often watched for the approach of

of day from his window, nor was his mind more at rest than his body; the certainty of his pupil's, connecting himself imprudently, would, in any unincumbered situation, have afflicted him; but affianced as he was to Miss Palmerston, his total destruction was, in the opinion of this wife and affectionate mentor, annexed to his marriage with any other woman. From Lord Greendale's condescension he had nothing to expect, and very little from the pleas of conscience, duty, or rectitude, so completely had his Lordship succeeded in deceiving his family, the world, and the Doctor, by locking up the treasures of his character, and letting them see it only with external marks of poverty. The only reasonable hope on which he thought he could build his success of dissolving so frantic a union, would be to take the Lady by surprise immediately before the ceremony was to be performed, and if he could not frighten her from her purpose by a less

threatening expedient to declare, in the presence of Lord Greendale, that she could have no pretensions to the honour of receiving his hand, for that it was already the property of another.

Such were the Doctor's intentions when, the next morning having, unobserved, followed the footsteps of the Marquis and his clerical friend to the Hotel, he entered it the moment after them. He had faithfully promised to conceal the part this friend had taken to occasion a separation, instead of promoting a union; for which reason he wrote thus on a scrap of paper, and sent it by a waiter to Lord Greendale.

N O T E.

Do me the honour to let me see your Lordship for a moment. I saw you enter this house, and am fortunate in the discovery, as I must have the honour to consult you,

you, without loss of time, on what I am to say to the Duke regarding your Lordship's remittances."

As the Doctor expected, so was the reply, that his Lordship was then very busy, but would see him there, or wait on him at home, in half an hour; there was no moment for delay. He advanced to the door where he had seen the Marquis enter: He gave a soft tap; the lock was not secured on the inside; the priest had undertaken to fasten it, but some how or other neglected to do so, being certainly the most absent man in the world when ever he thought proper. He had been presented to the Ladies, and the Marquis was leading his trembling, terrified bride to the table, before which he stood with the book open before him, whilst Mademoiselle supported her on the other side, flaming in rouge and rose-colour'd ribbands, and Jenkins had dropped on his knees to pray

for his dear Lord's happiness, prior to his taking possession of the double office that had been assigned him of clerk and father.

Such was the exact situation in which the whole party were disposed, when the Doctor's humble demand of admittance reached the Marquis's ear, and occasioned something very like confusion of face in the reverend officiator. The handle of the lock was gently turned, and but just cleared from the door, when a voice was heard on the outside, not unknown to any of the party, that said :

“ One word, my Lord, permit me the honour of one word with you, I beseech you.”

Miss Pladlow looked transfixed, but neither wept or fainted. Mademoiselle screamed. Jenkins concealed himself behind a screen. The parson closed his book,

book, bowed to the Marquis, and observed that it would be proper for him to retire till his Lordship should have sent away the intruder, and recomposed the Lady, which he accordingly did, without waiting a formal permission from his Lordship, making his exit through an opposite door to that where the Doctor was planted, had it been any man but the father of his bride, who had occasioned this delay to the completion of his happiness, the enraged Marquis would, probably, have hurled him from one extreme of the house to the other ; but here his rage was restrained by affection, and his actions governed by respect. In the dilemma he was reduced to, by seeing the lock made no resistance, when the hand of the Doctor was applied to it, he endeavoured to force Ann with gentle violence in at the door through which the Divine had already glided ; but resisting all his strength, and again finding her voice, which had nearly

forfaken her, on hearing that of her father, ſhe called upon him with a loud ſcream, that reſembled the cry of insanity, and fell motionleſs on the floor.

Presumption is an error ; let us ſteer far from it rather than riſk the imputation of it, by vainly preſuming to repreſent the complicated feelings of amazement, grief, anger, horror, love and compaſſion, that divided the ſoul, and agonized the countenance of Dr. Pladlow, when, on hearing his name ſo vehemently pronounced, he ruſhed into the room, ſaw that it was, indeed, his daughter, or, as it appeared to him at that moment, the inanimated clay cold corps of her who once was his daughter !

He gave the Marquis a look that penetrated to his ſoul, that look had a thouſand tongues, and every tongue was charged with this ſhort expreſſion : Is it you that
have

have destroyed my peace? Is it you that have murdered my daughter? He directed a commanding frown of banishment to the treacherous French woman, that like a mandate from heaven sent her from his presence. He spoke to neither; but seeing tears chasing each other down the cheeks of the poor Marquis, as he stood by the side of the lovely Ann, having lifted her into a chair, and reclined her head on his bosom, with one hand preventing her from falling, with the other holding drops to her nose. The severity of the Doctor's features relaxed: He removed him from his station, but not unkindly, and even pressed his hand as he took the smelling bottle from him, to perform at once the tender offices of parent and nurse.

A soft sigh issued from the bosom of Ann; the tide of life revisited her lips and cheeks. She opened her eyes, but

closed them again in transport, on finding herself fondly embraced in the arms of her father. He laid his cheek to her's, and soothed her with tenderness. She slid through his arms, and kneeled before him. Her uplifted hands were clasped together, and she exclaimed, I am pitied ! My father pities me ! Will he not pardon also his guilty penitent child ?

She is not guilty, cried the Marquis, throwing himself with an air of distraction by her side, in the same humble posture. Upon my soul, Sir, she is not guilty ; it is I that have deceived you ; the whole crime, if it is a crime to love, is all my own. Would to heaven she divided it with me, then I should be comforted. Had not your presence forbid my felicity, at this moment she would have been my wife ; she should then have loved me ; the force, the tenderness, the ardour of my passion, should have forced her to divide
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it with me. Yes, Sir, continued he, in rather a resentful accent, I am too well convinced I owed Miss Pladlow's concession not to my own influence, but to her fears of your displeasure; those are now removed, and I am undone!

It was in vain that the Doctor had often interrupted him to solicit he would rise; but when his Lordship had done speaking, he obliged him to quit his humiliating station. He placed himself between the Marquis and his daughter; his words or his looks had nothing reproachful in them; on the contrary, his whole heart was taken captive by compassion; his eyes swam in liquidated tenderness, and his voice, though firm, was meliorated by sympathy.

The misfortune, said he, that I always dreaded, and against which I have been always trying to guard you, my dear children, has been permitted to fall upon my

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head,

head, and would have laid it low in earth, if I had not fortunately directed my steps to this house in time, to stop the proceeding of an event so rash, so inconsiderate, as must have ended in all our destruction ; but before I proceed further in what I have yet to say, will your Lordship condescend to tell me by what means you became acquainted with my daughter ? and I shall then demand of her what were her motives for her extraordinary flight from Redberry, and still more wonderful appearance in this place !

Penetrated to meet nothing but mildness, where they had so much reason to expect the bitterest reproaches, they gave as distinct a detail of the whole affair, as if they had been rendering up their last accounts at the Throne of Grace. Nothing was concealed, and whilst the good man felt for the Marquis's disappointment, he rejoiced with abundant joy that his heart

was uncorrupted, and that it was only a misplaced passion to which he had been sacrificing false appearances on account of his daughter's separation from her lover. He had no fears to combat with, as, before the conversation was half ended, Ann had herself confirmed, what the Marquis had before advanced, by very innocently declaring, that now she was restored to her father's love and protection, she heartily forgave the Duke of Angrave, at the same time assuring Lord Greendale, with that sort of naïvete, which, if not remarkable for sensibility, was at least a proof of her sincerity; that when she should hear he was married to some beautiful woman of quality, who was worthy of his affections, she should rejoice at his happiness quite as much as if she had the honour of being his sister. She did not even keep to herself the interviews that had passed between her and Mr. Ashford, or how sorry she was to have made him so unhappy: In

short, she was herself the very best physician the Marquis could have found, for what he had hitherto supposed an incurable passion, one of those everlasting flames, which boys and girls are too apt to suppose, will burn world without end.

Dr. Pladlow, who, on this occasion, thought his Ann talked like an angel,, watched every turn of the Marquis's countenance, where, amidst many and various changes, he thought he could read this confession: "These sentiments may mortify me, but I would rather hear them from the lips of my mistress, than have them smothered in the bosom of my wife."

Before Doctor Pladlow had been in the Hotel half an hour he had called up a waiter, and, without quitting the room, had given him some private orders, which, it is probable, the Marquis might imagine

was

was to prepare a dinner; but when the same man returned at the end of three hours, and said all was ready, his Lordship began to suspect the truth. He started, turned pale, his eyes filled with tears, and he cried out, "My God! you are going then to leave me."

My dear Lord, you conjecture right. I go, indeed, but it shall be for a short time only. Will you have the goodness to meet me in Paris at my return?

I shall not live to obey you; why will you take her from my sight?

Look at her; learn of her to be resigned: It will also teach your Lordship another lesson. The woman, who is formed to make the happiness of Lord Greendale, should be endowed with sensibility like his, and return his love with equal tenderness.

His

His Lordship felt the delicate insinuation this remark conveyed. He coloured like scarlet, and, sighing, cast a tender, but reproachful, look on Miss Pladlow, who threw her eyes on the ground, afraid to meet the scrutiny of his, being conscious he would only read in them a confirmation of her father's oblique reflection, that her heart was not so warmly interested as his own.

It is necessary, continued the Doctor, that I should see the Duke of Angrave : This unlucky affair must reach him. I have good reason to suppose it will be spread over the city in a very few hours, and there are many scribblers in Rome ready to acquaint his Grace of all the particulars.

It is true, my daughter's name will not be brought into the charge, because there happened to be no witness of our explanation ;

nation; but allow me to observe, that by the letter Ann has received from his Grace, and which I have not yet seen, there can be no doubt to whom your father will affix the guilt of having seduced your Lordship's affection, and of slackening the reins of duty and obedience, which, before your unfortunate acquaintance with her, you never had resisted.

Ah! my dear Marquis, do not these considerations convince your reason? Do they not shew you how absolute the necessity is that forces me to leave you? The displeasure of a father is no light consideration. The resentment of your's must be appeased. Honour me with the commission to restore you to the arms of your family, and to reinstate you in the full possession of their affections.

Lord Greendale held out his hand, the Doctor pressing it between his own, said,
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This is kind, indeed ! Generous youth, of what is thy soul composed, so warm, and yet so rational ? I go then with your consent.

Alas ! you mould me as you please.

My expedition shall shew with what impatience I wish to return to you.

You will kill her with fatigue. I go with you, except you promise me not to travel with expedition.

Assure yourself, my dear Lord, she shall not be subjected to any inconvenience from which I can guard her. As he said this, he turned to embrace the Marquis, but he was gone.

Doctor Pladlow took Mademoiselle with them as far as the first town in France, where he dismissed her, not unprovided
for,

for, but with a reprimand that made her tremble under its asperity, followed by a stern assurance, that, if ever she again shewed herself in England, she should be given up to the just vengeance of an offended family, and receive her well earned sentence of banishment from the Duke of Angrave himself.

Having left Ann under the care of a female acquaintance in whom he could confide, and whose house lay in his road from Dover to London, Doctor Pladlow proceeded to the Duke of Angrave, and obtained an audience of his Grace, which has appeared in our history, as mentioned by Lady Dorothy Petting in her anecdotes of that family, communicated to Col. Fairfax through the same channel. Our readers have been also informed, that Doctor Pladlow again sat off to meet the Marquis; that his Lordship was returned, and had made his peace, by reluctantly consenting
to

to fulfil the Duke's engagement to Miss Palmerston, and the various methods he had afterwards taken to protract the celebration of the nuptials.

All these matters being so clearly explained, we have only to reveal what passed in the Doctor's private interview with the Duke, which her Ladyship, for want of information, Lady Selina being herself unacquainted with particulars, was unable to assist us in; nor are we inclined to circumvolution on the subject, so shall only say, that the Doctor repeated every minutæ of the transaction between the Marquis and his daughter from the beginning to the end of their acquaintance; that his Grace was exasperated at his son's conduct, but so well satisfied with that of the Doctor, as to assure him of his eternal friendship and gratitude. He disowned the letter that had been written to Miss Pladlow in his name. He had never, he added,

added, even heard that the Doctor had a daughter, and requested that, for the Lady's sake, both the circumstance of the letter, and her being any ways concerned in the meditated folly and madness of the Marquis, might be for ever concealed from all but themselves; not even intrusted to any branch of his Grace's own family, for that he was warmly interested in the preservation of her fame, on account of the very great obligations the honourable behaviour of her father had laid him under.

Long have we travelled backward in our memoirs, and being at last happily arrived to the present time, we hope the relation of Lord Greendale's juvenile adventures are not so voluminous, or ill-connected with the former part of our history, as to put every thing out of our readers heads, which we wished them to remember; but if this should be the case, we can put them in the way to refresh their memories, at
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the small cost of a few moments application, which, even in this golden age of female wisdom and female propriety, cannot be more innocently, or, perhaps, more advantageously, employed, than in turning to that chapter, which immediately precedes our little episode, where they will see who and who are together, and where their recollection will be renewed, by a second reading of the Marquis's note to his sister; and it will also remind them with how much indifference Lady Selina refused her unfortunate brother's request, that she would return home before the hour she had appointed, and then, when her own appointed hour was come, with how much chagrin she at last parted from the divine Colonel; having also seen her Ladyship make a departing congee to Lady Dorothy, present her hand to Colonel Fairfax, adjourn to the hall, and there, with an air of vexation, seat herself in her chair, the head let down, and a last adieu, smiled

smiled and nodded on the retiring object of her present admiration, they may, if they please, by the light of two flambeaux that preceded her Ladyship's chair, find their way to Angrave House; and when arrived there, they may depend on us for giving them all the intelligence we can collect of the further retrograde motions of the Marquis of Greendale.

C H A P. XXXVI.

THE first person her Ladyship met on stepping out of her chair, was the confidential servant of her brother, and our very old acquaintance Jenkins; she was yet smarting under the lash of self retrospection, and had not recovered her good humour; she asked with hauteur, what ailed his Lord, that he had ordered her servants to Lady Dorothy Petting's so much before their time? had she look'd at him, his face would have answered with many sorrowful expressions, that all was
not

not well; he had been weeping, and the lids of his eyes were almost swollen to the size of eggs; she did not wait for a verbal reply to her question, but passed into the anti-room, and was followed by Jenkins, who feared what he had to say, would afflict her Ladyship, and the natural humanity of his heart made him tremble, whilst he was informing her that his Lord having sent him on a message, which detained him two hours, had, during his absence, left the house; that as he was coming down Piccadilly, a hack chaise driving at a great rate, passed by him, he got a sudden view of the person who was in the carriage, and should, he said, have thought it had been his Lord, but that he supposed it impossible, his Lordship being still attended by his physicians, and not yet having left his apartment after the hurt he had received from the going off of the fowling piece. Hum, cry'd Lady Selina, speaking to herself, and grining satyrically, I shall

shall never forget that story of a gun going off; she then bade Jenkins proceed, and finish his tale of wonders as fast as he could.

The honest creature, who now saw there was no fear that her Ladyship's feelings would be much hurt, declared it his opinion, that the Marquis never intended to return home again, for besides the note left for her Ladyship, which had been sent to Lady Dorothy's, there was another letter on his table, directed for his Grace, and sealed with black wax, which, as the family were not in mourning, he wished might not be meant to convey more than perhaps his Lordship had express'd.

Lady Selina, who had taken up a pencil, and was sketching out a flower on some paper that lay on the table, said, It may be so, and enquired who attended her brother in this mighty pretty expedition, and was informed

informed that he had taken no servant with him, nor any change of cloaths or linen. Oh ! then I shall soon expect him back, observed her Ladyship ; but pray Mr. Jenkins, can you tell me what the Duke says to all this ?

His Grace, my Lady, replied Jenkins, was gone out an hour before my Lord disappeared, and has just sent word, that he shall sleep to night at Sir Arthur White's.

That's lucky enough, said her Ladyship, she then ordered him to bring her the letter, the black seal of which had been so tremendous to his timid apprehensions ; the truth is, that he feared his Lord intended to commit some act of violence on his own person, or why not take him as the companion of his flight, who had so long been the confident of his difficulties, and the sharer of his sorrows : why not at least acquaint him of his purpose, if it had

not been a fatal one ; would he have left him thus, with a dagger sticking in his heart ? no, said he, my dear Lord intends himself some mischief, or harbours a suspicion of my fidelity.

Such had been poor Jenkins's torturing reflections, from the moment he was informed of the Marquis's departure, to that in which he obeyed the orders of Lady Selina ; and having, with a mournful dejected countenance, delivered the letter into her hand, he retired to lament over his troubles, unobserved and unmolested.

The affectionate sister of Lord Greendale, turned and examined the letter in every direction, and would have been very glad of Madame Villeroy's assistance, to have come at the contents, but that ingenious preceptress, as ill fortune would have it, had retired into the country some months before, being threatened with a decline,

cline, and having, in the course of her recovery, tasted the sweets of independence, she had established herself very comfortably a hundred miles from town; had a smart box in a pretty village, a green court before her windows, a fine brass knocker on her door, killed her own mutton, visited her neighbours, and despised them.

Now though Lady Selina could not, on the present occasion, profit by her personal services, yet still she was indebted to her former instructions, for the perfect ease with which she opened, and reclosed the seal on her brother's letter, so delicately nice, that no eye could distinguish it had ever submitted to the operation.

Before her Ladyship had got through half the contents, she rang her bell, and sent orders to her woman to make haste and prepare her things to dress, for that she should be up in a few minutes; the whim

of dressing and going out was a sudden one, yet there were a thousand reasons why; it was extremely rational that she should dress and should go out; the house was so gloomy, it put her in mind of a funeral; the servants looked like mute mourners, and when they answered, Yes, my Lady, or no, my Lady, it sounded in her ears like the ill-omened croaking of so many ravens.

The Dutchess of Northly was that night to give a splendid supper, where all the fine men would be to a certainty; she had sent her excuse six hours before, because a finer than any of them was almost *tête à tête* with her at Lady Dorothy Petting's: the cause no longer existed, Colonel Fairfax might be gone to Jericho, for any thing she knew to the contrary; or he might be at the supper, for she could not suppose her Grace had omitted to invite him; Lady Margaret she knew would be there, she could
send

send for her out of the room ; she would serve as a chaperon, and as to her put off message, she would contrive that into a compliment, that should put her Grace in good humour ; in short, it was better that she should amuse herself abroad, than stay at home and die of ennuie ; and the hour was perfectly seasonable, it being but forty-five minutes after twelve, when she found herself at the Dutchess of Worthly's door.

Whilst Lady Selina is got into a corner of her Grace's assembly-room, with her sister, Lady Margaret Devero, and fifteen or sixteen other particular friends, where she is telling them of the great surprise she has been thrown into, occasioned by her brother's abrupt removal, and letting fall some hints, not much to the renown of Miss Palmerston's prowess, in making, or in retaining captives, whilst she is concealing nothing but the circumstance of the letter, and her own ingenuity, in

having forestalled the Duke, her father, in the knowledge of its purport; we shall let the cat out of the bag, and faithfully declare that part of the secret her Ladyship thought proper not to reveal, viz. the whole contents of the Marquis of Green-dale's epistle to his Grace the Duke of Angrave.

L E T T E R.

There is only one path by which I can escape perdition! true, it leads me from your Grace, very far from your paternal roof, but it will also lead me from a detested union, that my soul abhors. I renounce it for ever; I swear in the awful face of heaven, never to be the husband of Miss Palmerston! My father, I have tried with pains, I have struggled with agony, to bend my stubborn refractory will to your commands; it will not on this one sacrifice learn submission. I must be disobedient,

dient, but the force that compels me to opposition, almost reduces me to phrensy. No, my Lord ! I love you, I honor you, I revere you ; it is not my duty that submits, it is my passions that have conquered it ; on this one occasion only they hold it captive, on every other, it shall be without restriction under your own command, and devoted to the most critical obedience. I dare not plead for myself, because I never will retract. I never will meet Miss Palmerston at the altar. Let my sisters, and your little sons, my dear father ! plead for me ; they are not offenders, like me, let them sue at your Grace's feet for their miserable brother ; let them kneel and weep 'till they have cozin'd you out of your forgiveness, and rescued me at least, from your maladiſtion. I believe my ideas are confused ; I know that my soul is torn with anguish. My father ! she is married ! the only woman I ever adored, is the wife of another ; the intelligence

shocked, it confounded me, but surely it does not grieve me, it is impossible it should grieve me, she never returned my passion, and I have forgot to love her; but she has taught me a lesson, from which I have learnt to be disobedient. I have drank of the delicious poison, it has intoxicated my brain, and never will I unite my fate with one of her sex, 'till I again experience that dear effusion of exquisite tenderness, to which I have already owed the most happy, and most miserable moments of my existence. Judge, then, my Lord, if ever Miss Palmerston can be the wife of Greendale? Whilst I daringly presume, in this single instance, to set bounds to your Grace's authority, in every other my obedience shall be unlimited. My future conduct shall subject you, my dear father, to no pecuniary inconvenience, I will not give Miss Palmerston, or her mercenary guardians, a claim on your estates, by forming any other engagement, as long as she

she remains single, or at least, 'till she releases me from those galling fetters, which I never can submit to put on. After tearing myself from your Grace, and my family, how feeble are the pangs I sustain, on bidding adieu to the country, that has enroled me on her catalogue of wretches. If I visit her again, it must be on my own conditions. Shall a slave breathe the air of freedom, to give him the keener sense of his misfortunes? never will I return to chains, more insupportable than those of a felon. Oh! my father, restore me to liberty, and receive at your feet the most grateful, most affectionate, and most devoted of sons,

GREENDALE.

We hope our reader's remember, that Lady Selina made her brother a visit in his chamber, on the very day of his Lordship's writing this letter, and afterwards

G 5

leaving

leaving his father's house ; they will also recollect, that she left him rather in displeasure, and went to Lady Margaret Devero's, in Portland-Place, where young Lady like, having vented a little of her ill humour, at the expence of her sister's plebeian husband, and dispatched a note to her dear friend, Miss Palmerston, she redecked her face in the smiles of good humour, and dedicated the rest of the day to Lady Dorothy Petting, La belle Passion, and Colonel Fairfax.

When Lady Selina quitted the Marquis's room, he had by no means determined on what he was to do ; but something must be done, and that speedily, as he had a few minutes before received a visit from his father, to acquaint him he was just setting out for Sir Arthur White's, and that before his return, he should have fixed on a day for the completion of the marriage, bidding him take care that no
more

more premeditated accidents were called in to the aid of his disobedient sloth, and eternally rebellious inclinations. His Grace did not wait for a reply, but left his son not at all disposed for encouraging meditations on the grace of filial obedience; on the contrary, he ruminated deeply on the pleasures attending that sweet and tender passion, by which he had once been fascinated, and ran over in his mind the train of adventures to which it had given birth. Amongst the whole number, nothing seemed so wonderful, so unaccountable, as the anonymous letter that he received, before Miss Pladlow's arrival at Rome, and the forged one which had been sent to her, with his father's signature.

The appearance of Lady Selina can hardly be said to have put an end to his reflections on this subject, as may be surmised from the impressive wish that escaped him in her presence, and made her

Ladyship feel, from the fears of detection, what she never felt in the action itself, of striking a dagger through the very soul of his happiness.

Very soon after Lady Selina had taken herself off, Lord Carlington was announced; his Lordship is one of those sort of young men, who with the best dispositions in the world, mixes some foibles, and those he takes as much pains to blazen, as diligently to hide such actions, as would place his character above mediocrity.

Ah! my poor Marquis, cry'd he, as they exchanged a friendly shake of the hand, how comes it that I do not find you enlarged; is this cursed confinement to last you for ever?

Lord Greendale, who well knew the heart of his visitor, and that it concealed under a guise of levity, the strongest propensities

penalties to commiseration and sympathy, could not deny himself the gratification, which, of all others, is the most alleviating, that of complaining, he mentioned the interview with his father, and his distress at finding his Grace so determined to hurry him into a state, for which, at present, he felt invincible abhorrence.

Having heard him to an end, he observed, that perhaps his Lordship had mistaken the sentiment altogether, and that it was not an invincible abhorrence to the state, but to the Lady. Zounds, man! continued he, have done with lamentations; say but the word, here I am ready to take her off your hands; look at me, do you think she would refuse a fellow of my figure, and d—n me if I am off my bargain, though she should have fore eyes and a cloven foot.

The

The Marquis could not refrain from laughing immoderately at the odd manner in which he advanced his offers of serving him; but told him, there was only one way by which he could profit by his good intentions, and that was, if he would marry the lady, and give her fortune to the Duke.

Let his Grace propose the division, returned he, and take which half he pleases. I am just now so much in love with matrimony, that he may make his own terms.

Yet you have never seen Miss Palmerston, said the Marquis.

Nor ever desire to see her, retorted his friend, except to save you from execution, and that upon my soul I would do at any expence you can name.

Dear

Dear Carlington, your endeavours to divert my serious embarrassment, are kindly meant, but it is not from your generosity I can flatter myself with the hope of being redressed.

And why not, thou desponding Marquis? thou dost not know the extent of my generosity. I gave away yesterday to a friend of mine, what would have enriched me for life, had I kept it to myself, and may I be chief mourner at the funeral of my creditors hopes, and my own last guinea, if I ever parted with any thing so reluctantly, as with this treasure of treasures; and yet my bounty has made two beings so exquisitely happy, that I swear I do not repent it; but now I think of it, the gift might as well have been bestowed by your Lordship, as by me: how the devil Greendale, did your heart escape, mine is burnt to a cinder.

The

The Marquis, who did not comprehend his meaning, asked an explanation.

Nothing is so easy, but you are confounded dull, not to have guessed it long ago; who could I possibly mean, but the beautiful daughter of honest old Pladlow; have you never heard of her George, that you look so astonished; 'tis true upon my soul, this divinest of all divine girls, I yesterday morning, like a second Scipio, condescended to bestow on my friend Ashford; though had I seen her before we met at the altar, on the giving and taking scheme, the resignation of her to another, might have cost us a tussle; however, it is all over, and I am now ready for thy accommodation, to turn my thoughts to Miss Palmerston.

The vicissitudes our poor Marquis underwent, during the whole of this gay harangue, are not to be described; but
fortunately

fortunately they escaped the observation of Lord Carlington, who rattled away, for the space of another half hour, on the loveliness of the bride; her tender preference for the husband of her choice; the exquisite transports of his friend Ashford, and the composed happiness of Doctor Pladlow.

When his Lordship's subject or visit would have been exhausted, we cannot ascertain, because the Marquis, who had by this time fixed his plan of proceeding, put an end to both, by seeming to recollect a something that had before slipped his memory, the signal of taking out his watch, was followed mechanically by his visitor, who starting up, declared he was ten minutes behind his time, for escorting Lady Charlotte Ogle to Shakespear's Gallery: this, said he, is another proof of my willingness to serve my friends. Mar-
sham

tham would not attend her himself, and has put his burden on my shoulders.

The instant Lord Greendale found himself alone, he called for Jenkins, and ordered him away on a made-up message, which he was to carry so far out of town, that before he could return back again, the whole of his Lord's design would be accomplished; why, on this occasion he was not permitted to participate in its execution, can only be accounted for by a certain restlessness, very like suspicion, that infested his Lordship's mind, from the first moment he found out that his passion for Miss Pladlow had been discovered. He did not absolutely accuse Jenkins of betraying his confidence; he almost believed his asseverations of innocence; but the secret so dear to him, had taken air, somebody must have disclosed it; he suspected Miss Pladlow, Mademoiselle, Jenkins, and almost himself, for he continually made
his

his words pass before him in review, to examine if it was not possible that some expression of his own might inadvertently have escaped his most guarded caution, and given rise to his misfortunes; but after all, being unable to condemn himself, or acquit any other person, he resolved to have no confidant in his meditated flight, that his secret might not again be explored, and the place of his retirement invaded by the sollicitations of his family.

He wished Lady Selina to be at home, when the Duke returned from Sir Arthur White's, which he expected would be early in the evening, and that she might deliver the letter he had left behind him, to his Grace, very naturally concluding, he should in her find a warm advocate, and his father an affectionate comforter. With this idea, he ordered the porter to send her Ladyship's servants to Grosvenor-Square, so much before the time she had ordered them,

them, together with the note, which he also left to the care of this terrestrial cerberus. How well Lady Selina acquitted herself of the tender offices consigned to her by her amiable unfortunate brother, has already been partly explained, and may be more fully exemplified in the progress of our history.

CHAP. XXXVII.

MITFORT Abbey, the seat where Sir Arthur White and his family resided, was situated in Kent, but not in the most pleasant part of that extensive county, yet the Duke of Angrave has been heard to declare that he gave it the preference to any other fine place in the kingdom; he would allow that water, wood, and swelling ground, might have given it some small advantages, but then the air was so salubrious, the drives so safe, the walks so level, that on the whole his taste was sufficiently gratified; we do
not

not pronounce his Grace an amateur, but we may venture to say he really would have preferred the domains round Mitfort Abbey unornamented by stately plantations, navigable cuts, serpentine rivers or majestic mountains, to Mount Sion or even Paradise, unless the inheritance of them had been ascertained to his own descendants; that is to say, except Miss Palmerston had been Lady of the manor. Now at Mitfort Abbey, his Grace could be in his saddle, or whirl in his travelling carriage from sun rising to sun setting, and at the end thereof only find himself in the midway of that part of the Palmerston estate by which the dwelling was surrounded. On the death of the late possessors, who left their orphan daughter to the care of Sir Arthur and Lady White, for they both died of a malignant sore throat within a few hours of each other; there was a clause in the father's will by which the Baronet was intitled to a legacy of
twenty

twenty thousand pounds, and a thousand pounds a year for the board of the young heiress, provided that till she came of age, which was named for twenty-three, Sir Arthur and Lady White should remove to Mitfort Abbey, and there reside during the minority of their daughter, or till her marriage, when the engagement was finally to cease.

At the time this event happened the Baronet's fortune was such as made the conditions highly acceptable; scantiness of wealth had been his misfortune but not his fault, as there was no method in the catalogue of ways and means by which he had not tried to encrease it: from eighteen to thirty-five he had been making himself useful, and if we may be allowed the expression creeping into the side pocket of every man in power, to whom he could get himself or his talents recommended, but both had been unrewarded, if not entirely

tirely neglected, till chance threw him in the way of Mr. Palmerston, to whom on a certain occasion, where great abilities were necessary, he made himself so very serviceable, that he not only gratified his avarice but his ambition, by procuring him a title; and what were his sentiments of him to the latest time of his life, is best testified by the trust reposed in him, and the largeness of his bequest.

Lady White having little capacity of her own, supposed her husband had much more than was really his due, the art of accommodation excepted, she honored him accordingly, and was rather troublesome in her frequent appeals to his judgment for the most trivial of her words and actions, which at all times consisted of the most trivial composition, the whole stock of her accomplishments being confined to a tolerable knowledge in carving, an intolerable share of exactness in the adornments of her person, some civility, much formality,

many courtesys, and superabundant apologies for all possible occasions. From the hour Miss Palmerston was committed to her care, she thought it her duty to form the manners of her ward after her own model, and her Ladyship's application was so successful, that, even when but three years old, she had the pleasure to see her infant charge the very epitome of herself, another little Lady White in miniature.

When Sir Arthur and the other guardian, Mr. Anthony Pearce, signed the contract of their ward's marriage with the Duke of Angrave's son, a view to their own interest had not been intirely neglected; we do not say it was a bargain and sale business; but his Grace was ever after spoken of by these two gentlemen as possessing a character strongly marked by occasional traits of generosity and liberality. From the time Miss Palmerston was made acquainted with the engagement

they had formed for her, and the many advantages of so great an alliance fervently represented, she began to turn her eyes towards the Marquis with that sort of preference which is intirely abstracted from sensibility, but may be arranged under the article of prudence; to call it ambition would be a misapplication; that is a sentiment which will never thrive in the cold regions of a soul like Lady White's, and what she was unacquainted with herself, she could not be expected to teach her ward. If nature ever made one struggle for the mastery of her own passions in the icy bosom of her young hand-maiden, it was on the Marquis's constrained visit of leave before his departure for the Continent; but the spark of animation was so languid, that it did not survive his presence, and was never again rekindled.

The reports of his conduct, whilst abroad, were not admitted within the walls

walls of Mitfort Abbey, where his name was always pronounced with respect, and followed up by the most flattering encomiums on the dignity of his character; but this was a needless refinement, for had she heard all the evil that he wished her to hear, she would have met it with the same indifference she had done many personal slights from his Lordship. The Marquis, she would have said, must be my husband; it is my duty to think well of him, and then, like patience on a monument, she would have done exactly what she now did, have composedly sat down to attend his pleasure, when ever it should suit his convenience to ratify their union.

The day on which the Marquis withdrew himself was marked for being particularly unfortunate to his Grace of Angrave, as on that day he had presented to his elected daughter a bridal present of jewels, which, besides those worn by his

late Duchess, had, by additions made to them, cost the enormous sum of six thousand pounds !

Never was gift more graciously received, or more readily conferred ; it was surely the gift of affection, as she could have no claim on his benevolence, it being explained to his Grace by the guardians, that, during her minority, there had been a saving of two hundred thousand pounds, and if the fruit was so luscious, the tree must be good that had produced it, this noble personage, who had been very long confined in a rheumatic gout, by which he was much enfeebled, with his own trembling hands fastened on a costly necklace, at which was suspended, by a small chain of brilliants, a beautiful miniature of the Marquis. He afterwards saluted the passive Lady, and hoped she would have no objection to complete the happiness of his son, and confer on him-

self the honour of ranking her amongst the most estimable treasures of his family on that day fortnight.

A very low courtesy might have signified her acquiescence ; but that tacit assent was mightily strengthened by her saying, " Whenever your Grace and my Lord Marquis please." His Grace was enchanted. Sir Arthur's fallow complexion brightened with approbation, and his dark penetrating eyes spoke the cunning language of self-interest, whilst Lady White, covered with the confusion of her ward's importance, made a thousand fine speeches to the Duke, and a thousand congratulatory ones to the young Lady.

His Grace was so much importuned not to go from Mitfort Abbey that night, as made it impossible for him to return to town till the next day, without hazarding an imputation on that complacency of

humour, which, he thought, nothing in the world could now happen to disturb.

It was four o'clock in the afternoon when the Duke arrived in town. His first question was, How the Marquis did, and if he was alone? The servant to whom he spoke was confounded, and stuttered out a reply, that his Lordship was not at home; but that Lady Selina was in her dressing-room.

The Duke ordered his daughter to attend him, but before she could get herself in readiness to obey his commands, he had gone into his library, not at all displeased at hearing that his son was well enough to go abroad, as the day fixed for his marriage was at no great distance, and the plea of ill health would not be again brought forward to remove it further off, the step he had taken having fully announced his recovery.

Several

Several letters were lying on the table; his Grace took up one of them, and broke the seal; it was from Dr. Pladlow, and conveyed to his transported patron an account of his daughter's being married to Mr. Ashford. Nothing but the Marquis's marriage with Miss Palmerston could have occasioned the Duke to feel a more lively joy than this intelligence, which removed a bar to his son's establishment, that, notwithstanding the Doctor's honour, and the Lady's indifference, he had never ceased to dread, as an impending destruction to his grand design. He had not quite finished, but was smiling over the contents of this welcome letter when Lady Selina made her appearance, and her first words were: "Oh! dear papa, I am so glad you are come home; but where is George?"

His Grace looked very much to the purpose of his own contemplations, and said, significantly, "No matter, child,

where he is now, by this day fortnight we shall put fetters to his freedom. I sent for you to tell you that the time is fixed, and in thirteen days more you will salute your new sister, the Marchioness of Greendale."

My stars ! replied her Ladyship, how delightful ! But did you leave George behind you, papa, at Mitfort Abbey ?

I wish, said the Duke, you would learn to consider before you ask questions. How could I leave him behind me, when I did not take him with me ?

Yes ; but I supposed he followed your Grace when he went from hence.

I believe not, child, for he did not pass me on the road ; beside, that would have been a proof of obedience, which his former conduct

conduct has given me no reason to expect.

Lord, how odd ! replied Lady Selina, as if she had really been quite as much surprised as she pretended to be : I wonder what he can have done with himself.

What all the other young men about town do with themselves, carelessly returned the Duke, fauntering up and down St. James's Street, or riding in Hyde Park.

And so I should have thought too ; but you know, papa, George went away yesterday in the afternoon.

I know it ! replied the Duke, starting, and turning pale. How the devil should I know it ! Why was I not told of this before ?

H 5

Because

Because I thought he must be gone to you, papa, and, as he had been hitherto so undutiful, nothing could be more natural than for me to suppose that he was sorry for the slights he had shewn to Miss Palmerston, and was set out to make his peace with your Grace and the Lady.

Selina, you argue like a dutiful, rational child; but this rascally brother of your's is my perpetual torment. Gone ever since yesterday, and not come back yet! Has he sent no message neither?

No, indeed, papa, we have heard nothing of him since he went away, and I cannot think what is become of him. I hope he has not met with another misfortune from a fall or a gun.

Have done, said the Duke, angrily; you know these subjects put me in mind of his rebellious inclinations: I am willing
to

to forget them, and to believe all will yet be well. Perhaps he found the air necessary after his long confinement, and is gone to spend a night or two at some of his friends houses in the country.

The most likely thing in the world; well, it is very odd this idea did not occur to me, as well as to your Grace. O—d! that certainly must be the case, so if you please, papa, I will just step up stairs and finish my dress, as I have promised to call on Lady Margaret, and a few other of my friends, before dinner, so good bye papa, I shall see you about ten, as I mean to come home again, before I go out for the whole evening; saying this, she disappeared as suddenly as a star shoots, fearful that her progress might be stopped by a countermand from her father; but he had no intention to detain her, for chancing to cast his eyes over the letters he had not yet examined, he saw one amongst them, di-

rected in his son's hand, which he had eagerly seized on, and was breaking the seal, when she retired; perhaps it yielded more easily to his Grace's pressure, from having before submitted to a similar operation, under the delicate fingers of her skilful Ladyship.

To say what were the Duke's internal feelings, or in what words he vented his rage and disappointment, at finding his son's determined resolution, never to be the husband of Miss Palmerston; and that he had chosen banishment, rather than to fulfil his engagement, would be a task greatly beyond our undertaking, having a more tolerable talent for describing the gentle, than the turbulent passions of human nature.

We shall pass over his Grace's distortions, wreathings, cursings, and exclamations, in favour of that calm serenity, which

which soon succeeded to a storm, which seemed to threaten universal devastation; for be it known, that the storms of passion in the breast of an angry man, are like those in the natural world, they make a noise, racket and confusion, but are soon over. Besides this philosophical cause, there were many other reasons why the Duke of Angrave's rage should soon be appeased; a few only of the number will be necessary to our purpose, such as, that it was impossible for the Marquis to conceal himself in any foreign country, where his agents and bankers could not immediately trace him out; he would then go in person to bring him back, and never lose sight of him, 'till he had seen the marriage compleated. Another very composing consideration was, that he had nothing to fear from his former romantic passion, Miss Pladlow being otherwise disposed off; but the most comfortable reflection of all, sprung from the conviction which

which experience had taught him, how much, and how long he might rely on the unwearied patience of his future daughter, and the unreprieving complacency of her guardians.

His Grace's mind being now in a state of convalescence, he again sent for Lady Selina, and in consequence of the plan he had formed, he acquainted her, with a smiling countenance, that she might set her heart at rest about her brother, for that he had just been reading a very dutiful letter, which he had found amongst many others, on his table, to let him know he meant only to pass a few of the cold months in Italy, or the south of France, for the more perfect recovery of his constitution, and should return early in the spring to ratify his engagement with Miss Palmerston.

Her pretty Ladyship, who was far less remarkable for the sincerity of her heart,
than

than for the great command she had at all times over her countenance, checked a most violent propensity to mirth, and though she could have almost expired with laughing, at the mutual scene of duplicity that had been carried on between her and her father, not a muscle of her steady face was discomposed, and she replied with a naivette that never deserted her, when she thought an appearance of simplicity advantageous to her person or her purpose ; that she was happy beyond expression, that George was likely to be a good boy at last, and hoped his Grace would not be angry with him, as he left them only to get himself well, adding, she dare say, he would be a very affectionate husband when he came back again, and that he would like Miss Palmerston vastly.

True, true, replied the Duke, in a hurrying tone of voice, you say right, Selina, yes, yes, George will be a good boy at last, he

he shall be a good boy; but you must write child to the young Lady, and plead your brother's cause; she may be a little mortified, you must not let her be offended; you will know what to say; don't be sparing of his love; he shall one day or other make good your promises; it will not be amiss if you congratulate her on the prudent plan he has adopted, and hint your suspicions, that had he stayed longer in this cold climate, his constitution would have sunk under its severity; go, go, and do as I bid you my dear.

Will to-morrow do papa? for I am engaged every minute to day; but indeed, and indeed, if your Grace will excuse me 'till the morning, I will write all that you command me, and a great deal more than I have time to think of at present.

The Duke, who on all occasions but one, was the most docil father in the world, particularly

ticularly to the female part of his family, by whom he had suffered himself to be governed, since the death of his Duchess, assented to the proposal, and his gay daughter, who was already on the wing, immediately took flight.

Being left entirely alone, his Grace threw himself back in his easy chair, and for some moments closed his eyes, and fell into a train of meditation, not on things above, but on things below; amongst which, the valuable jewels he had left behind him at Mitfort Abbey, were not forgotten; he had given them absolutely and unconditionally; his son might die, or he might continue refractory, or he might never be prevailed upon to return; what then would become of the necklace, the chain, the ear-rings, the flowers, the pins, and the bracelets; he could not make a legal demand of them, and judging by the golden rule

rule of doing as you would be done by, a voluntary restitution of them was not to be expected; to divide soul and body, was not so terrible a consideration to the Duke, as to divide his Grace from any part of his property; and to avoid the present desperate misfortune by which he was threatened, he determined to do as much, or more than ever man had done before; what that resolution was, will appear in due time; it was desperate, it was the dernier resort, the forlorn hope of all his expectations, and every other expedient must be tried, before he could act with so much intrepidity, as the plan he meditated would require to carry into execution; so leaving his Grace writing to the guardians of Miss Palmerston, with the same sort of language and apologies in which he had commanded his daughter to address Miss Palmerston herself, and taking every other step to discover, as quietly as possible, to what

what part of the continent the Marquis had withdrawn himself, we shall proceed to speak of the other honorable personages who have already been brought forward on our historical theatre.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXXVIII.

MRS. Edwin, after she had joined Miss Fairfax at her sister Dormer's, was for several weeks prevented from proceeding to London by a severe fever, the consequence of the agitating scenes she had passed through in the last few days of her remaining at Edwin Place, and, probably, the disorder was augmented by the force of spirits she had exerted to conceal from her friends the shock her susceptible heart experienced, on being obliged to relinquish the hopes she had formed of renewing

renewing that attachment, which commencing in infancy, had "Grown with her growth, and strengthened with her strength."

Emely would have renounced every expectation in life, rather than leave her beloved protectress to languish on the bed of sickness without her personal attendance. It was possible that she might incur her aunt's displeasure by staying in the country; but it was certain she must fall under self-condemnation if, for any interested consideration, she neglected the tender offices of gratitude and affection.

Her brother, in every respect, one of the most fashionable men of the present age, we have reason to think, did not forfeit his pretensions to the character, by adopting sentiments in this case exactly similar to those of his sister. He not only

only consented to, but also highly approved of the sacrifice she made to friendship, and added, to the sanction of his own approbation, that of Lady Dorothy Petting, whose affection for her nephew made her almost forget that he had a sister, or that she had any other relation than himself.

In the course of six weeks Mrs. Edwin was enough recovered from her indisposition to undertake the journey, and a house, in Grafton Street, being ready for her reception, she wrote to Colonel Fairfax, and fixed the day on which he might expect them in town.

With this agreeable intelligence he flew to Grosvenor Square, where he had the mortification of meeting Lady Charlotte Ogle, who, of all his aunt's visitors, had the smallest portion of his favour; nor had her Ladyship been more liberal towards himself, so that the balance of favour

was pretty equal between them. The case might have been widely different, had the Colonel's mask of politeness, which good manners made him put on in her presence, been composed of thicker materials, or had her eyes been less cunningly penetrating to have seen through it, no woman of her description ever looked twice on Colonel Fairfax without wishing to retain him in her suit of captives, and Lady Charlotte had not discredited this general assertion. She had admired, praised, flattered, and followed him; but finding no hopes that her endeavours would be successful, and at all times unwilling to make the most trifling sacrifice of her interest to her pleasures, she now formed no other design against him, than that of undermining both him and his sister in the affections of their aunt, whose beneficial attachment to herself, she had good reason to believe, would be impaired by her fondness for the children of her deceased brother; and to accomplish this plan, she was determined

no

no expedient should be left untried, if the selfishness of her disposition had wanted the support of auxiliary motives, her vanity and her envy would have furnished them.

She had heard Miss Fairfax was handsome, and that, in her estimation, was a crime, for which she ought to be banished from the circles of fashion, and that it would be impossible to do, if she was received under the roof of Lady Dorothy Petting, where she would unavoidably be treated with a sort of distinction, to which, in fact, she had no pretensions, by all who wished to continue well with her Ladyship, whereas, if she could contrive to gain her but a coldish kind of reception in Grosvenor Square, and so manage her matters as to bring it about that she should reside with Mrs. Edwin, instead of Lady Dorothy, she fairly drew this conclusion from such a manœuvre, that as Mrs. Edwin was a good sort of a woman, which is to say, that

Mrs.

Mrs. Edwin was not at the very top of fashion, she would visit and be visited by good sort of people only, and of course be entirely excluded from the very first circles of all.

This ingenious Lady had been sitting and discoursing with her Dowager friend more than an hour, when they were joined by Colonel Fairfax, who, with a look of exquisite pleasure, presented to his aunt the letter he had that morning received from Mrs. Edwin, and told her he was come to bespeak a share in her heart for his belov'd Emely, who she would find by that letter would soon be at her Ladyship's feet to claim it in person.

Lady Charlotte rose to take her leave; the Colonel begged he might not be the means of driving her away. Pray let me go, she replied; I am but an intruder. You want to talk over domestic matters,

and I never meddle in family affairs. In the struggle between going and staying, she happened to tread on the toe of a little dog, which, with two others, she had the moment before gently removed from her lap. The offended creature yell'd out its complaints so pathetically, that Lady Dorothy, who was beginning to read Mrs. Edwin's letter, threw it out of her hand, exclaiming, in a tone of terror and reproach, "For God's sake ! what have you done ?"

Lady Charlotte was re-seated—had taken up the injured favourite—was asking its pardon, and bestowing on it a thousand tender caresses. I never could have imagined, continued her Ladyship, that you, of all people in the world, would have been so extremely careless ; indeed, Lady Charlotte, it was monstrously cruel, when you know too that the poor dear little creature is with child ! This last speech was more than her nephew

nephew could stand ; but taking the opportunity their confusion afforded him, he rushed out of the room, indulged the effusions of his humour in a laugh that was almost convulsive, and again striving to adjust his features, and give them a degree of seriousness, he returned to the Ladies, who he happily found in a state of pacification, and the pregnant darling snoring away, as if no misfortune had befallen her.

This Mrs. Edwin, said Lady Dorothy, having read and returned the letter, seems to speak of your sister, Charles, with a great deal of consideration, and her friendship may be of mighty advantage to her future fortune, if she manages properly.

The Colonel was going to make some reply, when Lady Charlotte, who was probably afraid that Lady Dorothy's conversation might be analogous to what had

passed in their *tête à tête*, and, perhaps, be-
tinged by the advice, of which that
morning she had been particularly liberal,
made a second motion of retiring, which
meeting with no further obstruction, the
aunt and nephew were left to themselves,
when her Ladyship proceeded.

I say, my dear, it is a very fortunate cir-
cumstance that Emely has made herself
so necessary to the happiness of this good
woman, as I really find to be the case by
the letter you have shewn me, she even
says she cannot resign her to me without
reluctance; and —

I beg your pardon, my dear Madam,
replied the Colonel, interrupting her with
some avidity; but I fear you have intirely
misapprehended the meaning of Mrs. Ed-
win's expressions in my sister's favour; the
affection with which she honours her has
nothing of weakness in its composition,
she

she desires, and is intitled to a second place in her heart; but her claims do not interfere with that respect, gratitude, and affection, which, a sense of her own duty, and your Ladyship's intended goodness, demand from her, and Mrs. Edwin, will herself, next to the grateful son and daughter of your adoption, be the most gratified of human beings, in resigning Emily to your maternal protection.

This may be all true, and you have acquitted yourself very handsomely on the occasion; but you must know, Charles, I am still of opinion, that it will be more for the advantage of my niece to be with Mrs. Edwin in town rather than with me. We had been talking of this matter before you came in, and Lady Charlotte Ogle, who is the most sensible woman in the world, thinks I am perfectly in the right.

May I be permitted to know your Ladyship's reasons for this sudden change of measures, asked the Colonel, adding, in a resentful tone, your own judgment will be decisive with me; the stamp of Lady Charlotte's approbation, I must confess, would add nothing to its respectability.

Now, child, I see you are angry; and with poor Lady Charlotte; but, indeed, you are wrong: I must not suffer you to remain under such an error. The only great objection she made to my niece's living with me was the largeness of my family, and the number of rooms they were obliged to occupy, which, you know, is all true; besides there was a chance, as she very rightly observed, that Miss Fairfax and my little folks might not agree, and in that case we should have nothing but family dissensions all day long, and then, if I am appealed to, I may not be quite impartial; for I never could forgive

a premeditated slight to any of those dear creatures, casting a look of gratitude round, above and below her, to whose endeavours of diverting me I am indebted for the happiest hours of my life.

Colonel Fairfax was attacked at the same moment with three sorts of inclination, one to laugh at his aunt's folly, one to curse Lady Charlotte's officiousness, and one to fall out with his bread and butter; yet, as neither of these were to be indulged but at the expence of his sister's and his own expectations, he submitted to the check of prudence, and only replied, that he hoped, when he had the honour to present his sister to her Ladyship, the humanity of her heart, and the gentleness of her manners, would soon remove any prejudice that was not rooted in aversion, or that did not spring from malice.

Lady Dorothy dreaded to offend her nephew, whom she loved almost equal to any of her little folks, and reading in his countenance more than was expressed in his words, she took his hand in her's, and assured him, Emely, for his sake alone, should ever share with him in her affections, and, notwithstanding she thought it so much better on many accounts, that she should continue with Mrs. Edwin, rather than live entirely with herself, yet it would be only a nominal separation, as she should expect to see her in Grosvenor Square every day, and all the day long.

The Colonel, by this time, had coolly considered what an advantage such an arrangement would be of, to the heart, the health, and even the morals of his sister, as well as the satisfaction it would mutually afford her, and the kind protector of her youth, not to be separated from each other on her first dangerous launch into the
great

great world; he was therefore not only contented, but even delighted, with the very proposal, which had at first struck his apprehensive tenderness with a pang not merely of disappointment, but sore mortification, and he now thanked his aunt, with a warmth and gracefulness that could leave her no room to doubt of his sincerity.

How comes it Charles, said her Ladyship, with abundant good humour, that you charm me more and more every time I see you? I promise you to take care of Emely, I will give her five thousand pounds, and if she is half so handsome as you are, I will get her a good husband; but the very high views I have entertained for your establishment, will put it out of my power to do more for her; pray child, is Mrs. Edwin a mighty old woman?

By no means, Madam, I believe she is some years younger than Lady Charlotte

Ogle, and is still very charming, infinitely superior to any young Lady I have seen since I came to London.

Ah, you forget Lady Selina! but we will talk more of her by and bye; in the mean time, as I think myself much obliged, on my niece's account, to this Mrs. Edwin, and as you say she is still well looked, I should be pleased to find her out a proper alliance, that is, if she intends to set out on a second venture, otherwise I would on no account persuade her to adopt such a measure, as it may be of disservice to Emily; but if she is inclined that way, 'tis in vain to contend with a widow, so determined, and I should be glad, in that case, to shew that I am not insensible of her kindness to my family, by giving her my advice and assistance; and as she is of a respectable house, still handsome, you say, and well jointer'd, I dare say I shall be able to serve her.

Suppose,

Suppose, said the Colonel, with a very grave countenance, your Ladyship was to turn away from those splendid prospects, you do me the honor to say you have in view for my establishment, and propose me to Mrs. Edwin; the work is half completed already, for we have loved almost as long as we have known each other.

God forbid! Why will you try my patience, nephew? am I never to make you understand, that an ill-timed jest always displeases me? whilst you live, name it not again; that there is even a possibility of Earl Delborough's nephew, and the declared heir of Lady Dorothy Petting, connecting himself with the widow, or the daughter of a country Squire. Her Ladyship concluded this solemn adjuration, by an erection of the head, a severity of features, and a doubtful silence; but all those symptoms of displeasure, fled before their military opponent, who very soon dislodged them

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them by his conciliating forces of pleasantry, and well-timed acknowledgments.

The Colonel having restored himself to the good graces of Lady Dorothy, she asked him if he had never seized on any of those favourable opportunities, which the evident partiality of Lady Selina Dangle afforded him, to forward his pretensions; Though the meaning of this question was fully obvious, he chose to look surprised, and as if he had not understood it: pish! said she, how childish this is; I do not ask if you have made proposals to her, because that could not be done, without my assistance, but in the two months you have known her, and been constantly in the same parties with her, I suppose you must have spoken to her, you must have said something to the purpose.

Faith, very little Madam, replied he; there are so few, and such short vacancies

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in her Ladyship's conversation, that I have found no opportunities in which I could talk nonsense of any kind; Lady Selina's happy fluency of expression, like the ocean, having an exclusive right over all other lesser bodies of water, to run backwards and forwards, and to make itself heard in all quarters. The last word was but half pronounced, when Lady Selina presented herself before them in *propria persona*.

I am come, said she, for one moment, to tell you the strangest news you have heard this seven years; I am so fortunate in finding your Ladyship not gone out, and so delighted to meet Colonel Fairfax with you; now you must both guess what I have to tell you, it is about a wedding, but I will give you a hundred years to find out who are the parties.

The Colonel replied, that provided no accident happened to prevent him, he would

would accept the challenge, and do himself the honor to wait on her Ladyship a hundred years hence from that day, and declare who he supposed to be the happy couple.

Lady Dorothy took what she thought the charming occasion, of dropping a hint in the way of business; she sigh'd, wished it had been a union between two of the dearest friends she had in the world, and hoped it would not be a hundred weeks, before she saw this favourite wish of her heart accomplished. Lady Selina, not being in reality so dull as the Colonel, from choice, would make himself appear to be, sent a smile side-ways to the aunt, which glanced by the nephew, and if he had examined the messenger, he would have learnt nothing from the intelligence it conveyed, that was not to his own advantage.

L—d, Colonel Fairfax! you are certainly the stupidest of all animals, cry'd she, in a peevish voice, and with a disconcerted countenance, which almost said "I hate you, for not loving me," so you would take a hundred years to find out a secret, which you might have only for asking. Now it it was not for the sake of my dear Lady Dorothy, who I know must be dying with curiosity, I would keep it to myself 'till you repented of your indifference.

Believe him not, said the industrious Dowager, indifference has no part in his character; I wish, my charming young friend, you knew his heart as well as I do, but these are subjects. —

Stop, for heaven's sake, Madam, interrupted the terrified Colonel, who was confused beyond measure, at his aunt's indirect advances, and his own awkward situation, will you not permit Lady Selina? pray
dear

dear Lady Selina be so good ; well then, I will guess, is it ? — is it ? — now the deuce take me if I can think of any two names in the whole calender of my acquaintance.

You give it up then, said her delighted Ladyship, who enjoyed his incoherence, and placed it to her own account.

Undoubtedly, and with all my heart, was the reply.

Now what will you both say, when I tell you, upon my honor, that indolent, affected, speaking figure, Lady Augusta Drawl, has this very day proclaimed herself not a bride, but a downright wife.

My God ! exclaimed Lady Dorothy, married, and I not know it !

—d ! she has been married more than six months, so they say ; but the poor dear

dear was afraid to discover that she had stolen a husband, 'till there was a sort of necessity for confessing the theft; but then the happy Romeo of this languishing Juliet, who do you suppose him to be? why no other than your Ladyship's old favourite, Parson Fotherton.

This is almost incredible, and requires no less authority than your own; to make me believe it possible, that two people with whom I am so intimate, should put themselves into such a situation, without even consulting me, when they both know how happy it makes me, to give my advice on such critical occasions. This was Lady Dorothy's observation, with hands lifted up, and eyes extended beyond their usual dimensions; to which she added, but my dear Lady Selina, you are very sure all this has really happened.

If

If there is any mistake in the representation, it is not I, but her own mother must be accountable for it, said Lady Selina; not ten minutes ago, just as I was coming away from Mrs. Egmont's, a great friend of the everlasting Lady Watchit, who should come in but her identical Ladyship, brim full of weeping and wailing, for the imprudence of her daughter, which, it seems, she had never found out 'till then. I saw something was the matter, returned to my seat, and just stayed long enough afterwards, to hear the whole history, half of which I have already forgotten. I only remember, that I left the dissatisfied matron frenzied herself to a packthread, that her beautiful, rich, wise, and delicate Augusta, had thrown herself away on a paltry parson.

As to that part of the story, said Lady Dorothy, he is of noble birth, and I am not so much astonished at any little inequality

equality there may be in the parties themselves, but can never reconcile it to my imagination, why I was not consulted.

L—d, Ma'am, I told you before, that they consulted no earthly thing, but their own inclinations, and who can say they may not fall into the self-same error; she looked intelligently towards the Colonel. I'm sure I shall not be the first to condemn them. Your Ladyship very good-naturedly observed, his family is noble, and having hung so long on the brambles, she might have done much worse; his person too is handsome enough; besides, he has not either the appearance or manners of a parson, and since he has got himself crop'd, I protest he looks quite as much the man of fashion, as if he had never meddled with the church in his whole life. I have heard Lord Hagglewell declare, he is as good a pugilist as himself; nay, he talks of using his interest with the minister,

to

to make him a bishop; but now that he will be master of Lady Augusta's large fortune, I hope he has more spirit than ever to think of following his business again; at least, setting up for a Bishop, it would lay him under shocking restraints, and what would become of a certain Lady's assembly, for I am told that, before he is made a Bishop, he must swear to frequent no public amusements, or even play at cards on a Sunday.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXXIX.

IT may be observed, that after Col. Fairfax had carried his point, of withdrawing the ladies' attention from one topic, and fixing them on another, he did not once interrupt their conversation, by either question or comment; neither had Lady Augusta, or the Reverend Mr. Fotherton, any share in his thoughts, during a silence of at least fifteen minutes; he was all that time employed in contemplating the very pretty face of Lady Selina, and regretting that the features of her mind were not equally faultless

faultless and engaging ; he wished to have bent his inclinations the way his aunt would have directed them, but it was Lady Selina herself who prevented him from making the effort.

Nature had formed him too handsome for a saint, but Doctor Harvey had taught him to be a Christian ; and it must be allowed, there is much sound wisdom in the character of a Christian, at least our Colonel was indebted to it for many of the wisest rules, by which he steered his conduct ; and those which he most invariably observed, were never to make a friend of that man, who by the daring independance of his actions, would seem to proclaim himself his own creator ; or a wife of the woman, who can smile at a jest on religion, and who does not feel herself insulted, when she hears its duties spoken of contemptuously, or its mysteries made the subject of gay ridicule. Influenced as he was by such obsolete maxims, Lady Selina had certainly missed her

her aim, if she intended to captivate his heart, by pointing the brilliancy of her wit against the church, the Bishops, and the parsons.

The remaining part of this morning conversation, chiefly consisted of modern anecdotes, in which the recent elopement of two married ladies, one with a young military peer, the other with the son of a peer, made the principle figures, and were treated as matters of course, only that Lady Selina observed, she should not be able to visit them when they came back, unless they got reconciled to their husbands, and were received at court.

When Lady Dorothy mentioned how very soon she expected her niece Fairfax in town, Lady Selina testified the most lively transports of joy, and begged they might be exceedingly intimate, for there was nothing she longed for so much, as to
convince

convince the world, how possible it was for two girls to form the most violent friendship for each other, that should only end with their existence, and on which she had held a thousand arguments with a thousand people. To this fine romantic flourish Col. Fairfax bowed, smiled, and said her Ladyship did his sister too much honour; that she was a little Rustic, whose sentiments and manners, he feared, would not be at all understood in the beau monde.

So much the better, she replied, that will be novel and charming. She then began talking of her brother, wished he was returned from the Continent, hoped he would break off his affair with Miss Palmerston, and fall in love with her dear new friend, who, she was quite sure, would be her sister, if Lord Greendale was allowed to follow his own inclinations.

We

We shall conclude this chapter with observing, that Lady Selina spoke a little at random, when she talked of her brother's return from the Continent ; for tho' many weeks were elapsed since the Marquis had withdrawn himself from his family, and though the Duke's inquiries to find out the place of his retreat were diligent and unceasing, yet all his Grace's pains had been hitherto ineffectual ; and at this very time he had dispatched agents, in whose secrecy he confided, to pursue his son through France, Germany, and Italy, till they should have obtained some certain intelligence of his Lordship's motions. Whatever were his Grace's feelings on the subject, they were confined to himself, for to Miss Palmerston, her guardians, his own family, and the world in general, he was the most contented father imaginable, and his son the most constant correspondent. A foreign post seldom arrived that

VOL. III. ·K he

he did not give a succinct account, either that the Marquis's health was better or worse, to all inquiries.

CHAP.

C H A P. XL.

YOUR honour, please God, will have fine weather for your ride this morning, says Thomas Parr, casting a look at the window as he stood behind his master tying up his hair. The Colonel's groom and horses were already at the door; it was just as he was setting out to meet Mrs. Edwin and Miss Fairfax, on the day they had appointed to be in town.

It is a pure hard frost, continued Thomas, and exercise will keep your honour

K 2

warm;

warm; but I hope Madam Edwin and Miss Emmy will take care and wrap themselves up, or the sharp air will nip them sadly; it is a long pull at this cold season, and, in my mind, one day in the country is worth a hundred here.

And what, pray, are your objections to London, asked his master, with a certain kindness of voice, which his old servant always understood as a signal to proceed in his discourse, and of which indulgence he never failed to avail himself. Have you met with any misadventures since you came hither, honest Thomas?

Nothing to speak of, replied Thomas; but if your honour would know all, why, I must say, I don't think the London servants are a bit better than their masters, and mistresses. I am sure, if all was fair and above board, I should not have lost

six guineas playing at the cards since I have belonged to their meetings.

Ah! Thomas, Thomas, said the Colonel, where was thy wisdom?

Why, as to that, Sir, I cannot accuse myself, and they will all say the same, if you please to ask them; for I never was haul'd in to play at their whist, as they call it, without telling them of the heinous crime of gambling. I believe your honour knows I am no fool; but they minded me no more than if I had been one of her Ladyship's parrots. Wisdom is a jewel in the country; but in London, I will be bold to say, it is not worth a brass button.

If these are your sentiments, said the Colonel, with much assumed gravity, perhaps, had I consulted you about my sister's

K 3 coming

coming to town, you would not have advised me to bring her here at all.

Thomas, whose familiarity was bounded by respect, step'd forward, and, making a profound bow, observed, that had his honour condescended to do him that honour, he was pretty sure, and he did believe, that he should have signified to his honour that the Ladies, God bless them! had better stay where they were, like harmless lambs frisking in their own pasture, than to break their pales, and venture into the devil's territories, and, most likely, be devoured by wolves, foxes, tygers, and all manner of enemies, and where they would see nothing like themselves, if they were to live in London a thousand years.

There is some judgment and much truth in thy observations, honest Thomas, said the Colonel; but since they have ventured
so

so far on their road to make the experiment, hasten to get me ready, that I may go and conduct them. Never dream of wolf, fox, or tyger. Am not I on duty, and except the guard sleeps, where is the avenue by which the enemy can enter to molest us ?

Ah ! and please your honour, it is not about Madam Edwin that I am overtimersome, because her Ladyship has got enough years upon her head to know what's what ; but, Miss Emmy, God bless her ! I have not seen in my mind one Lady in all London fitting to keep her company. The young Ladies in this town, to my thinking, are no more like her than I am like the king of England. If your honour will give me leave, I'll tell your honour what Mrs. Bridget Deacon, my Lady's housekeeper, said to me the other night, and what I said to her in the way of argument.

K 4

When

When Thomas requested this favour, he had his master's boots in his hand, and received his permission to make his tale just as long as he might take in drawing them on; but no longer, and whether by design or accident, it was remarkable they did not go on with their usual ease, but were fitted and refitted at least a dozen times; and even that would not have done, for the completion of Thomas's conversation with Mrs. Bridget Deacon, had not the limited moments been eked out by the operation of hat brushing, which, on this one occasion, was not only performed in presence of the Colonel, but almost in his teeth, Thomas being much of a certain member's opinion, who once said in the House of Commons, "If we speak to no purpose, to what purpose do we speak?" And surely a man cannot speak to less purpose than when he addresses himself to another, who is not within a hearing distance.

Thomas

Thomas began, continued, and ended; his rehearsal in the following words:

Her Ladyship's domestics, and please your honour, always call me their fellow servant; so says Mr. Vertien to me the last time my Lady had company, Will you be so good, fellow servant, as to help us to hand about the refreshments?

Pray do, said Mrs. Bridget, and tell us, when you come down again, if you can see any one amongst our fine young Ladies that you think would make a good wife for your handsome master. I beg your honour's pardon for making so free, but Mrs. Bridget did actually say the very words.

The Colonel smiled; it certainly was not a symptom of displeasure, at least so thought Thomas; for it only caused one of those short pauses, That a horse on full speed may be observed to make, when he

is forced to pass by an object that frightens him, and being once cleared from it sets off with more speed than before.

To be sure I shall, says I; but as to my chusing a wife for his honour, that is quite another affair, so taking a falver in my hand, I followed her Ladyship's servants up stairs; but seeing so many Nobles altogether in a bunch, or like a cluster of grapes, as one may say, I was going back again, but took courage, on seeing a little bit of the top of your honour's head rising up above a great many Ladies, dressed like queens, who were standing round you as thick as bees about honey, and all talking to you at the same time, so I desired they would make room, and I carried the cakes to your honour; but you did not, I believe, observe me, for you kept on talking to the quality. Now, though I had done nothing but my duty in serving my own master first, the Ladies tittered,

and looked so bold, when I very civilly desired them to make a little way for me to pass, that they put me quite out of countenance, and I heard one of them say to another, Father Adam has certainly come out of his grave to attend us, so, not knowing what to answer, I kept my distance ; but Mr. Vertien told me the names of all the Lords and Ladies, and when I went down to take my own tea with Mrs. Bridget, she asked me how I liked them ?

Truly, Mrs. Bridget, says I, if my betters do not like them more than I do, they will never get husbands as long as oak, ash, or gribble grows.

Upon my word, Mr. Parr, says she, you are very hard to be pleased ; I fancy the Colonel will not be half so difficult. Pray, did you take notice of a very pretty Lady, dressed in sky-blue, with a great many red roses, blue feathers, and diamond-

pins in her head. I am sure you never saw any thing more handsomer in your life, Mr. Thomas.

I beg your pardon there, Ma'am, says I, my master's sister is ten thousand times more handsomer.

How can that be, says she, for Lady Selina Dangle, the young Lady I mean, is the daughter of a Duke, and will have a hundred thousand pounds to her fortune.

I know well enough who you mean, Ma'am, says I; but if she was daughter of the Lord Mayor, I would still argufy, that she is no more to compare to Miss Fairfax than a dandelion is to an orange-tree in full blossom.

Well, Mr. Thomas, I did not mean to offend you, says she, so I beg we may not quarrel about it; so, says she, if you please, for a bit of fun, I will ask you a few civil questions;

questions ; for we London Ladies have no great ideas how any thing that is very handsome can possibly come out of the country. Suppose now I pull Lady Selina to pieces, and you pull your young Lady to pieces, and then see what we can make of them.

Mrs. Deacon, says I, somewhat nettled, for she very well knew, your honour, that both she and I came out of the country; I can't chuse but understand what you say about the country; but though I have had the honour to be clerk of a parish, it must be a wiser man than I am to find out what it is you would be at with her Ladyship and Miss Emmy, when you talk of pulling them to pieces.

Well, to be sure, says she, laughing till her sides shook again, Mr. Thomas, says she, there is not another Christian man, or Christian woman, in all London, who would

not have understood it ; for instance, I say that Lady Selina is tall, slim, strait and taper ; that she has fine eyes, fine teeth, fine hair, and a fine skin ; and now it is your turn to say in which of these particulars she is excelled by Miss Fairfax, and that I call pulling them to pieces.

If that be all, Ma'am, says I, my young Lady need not be ashamed to sit down in any company, or to shew her shapes, or her face, before twenty such beauties. She is as tall, as slim, as strait, and as taper as your Lady Selina. You say nothing about feet, Ma'am, says I ; now Miss Emmy's are admired wherever she goes, and what is still better, a thousand blessings follow her footsteps. Her hands are like the mercies of heaven, never closed by hard-heartedness, and they are as white as your apron, Mrs. Bridget. As for eyes, there are none such in the whole world as Miss Emmy's, for if a starving man was to ask her

her charity, and she had nothing to give him, he would see so much pity in them, that whilst he looked upon her face he might forget his hungry condition. Her teeth are like two flocks of sheep newly shorn, fenced in by a hedge of scarlet berries; then, as to her hair, it is as God made it, Mrs. Bridget, and shines in the sun like the rind of a ripe chesnut. London art may make whiter complexions, and redder too, I shan't dispute it, Ma'am; but nature never put a piece of work out of her hand better finished from head to heel than my master's sister, Miss Emely Fairfax.

I am very happy, says Mrs. Bridget Deacon.

Here the Colonel thought proper to interrupt the warm-hearted old man, who was endeared to him by a thousand affectionate services, not only to himself, but to
his

his father, twenty years before the area of his birth; he thanked him for his attachment to his sister, praised his descriptive talents, but observed, that his boots being on, his hat brushed, and the ladies by this time far advanced on their journey, he could not then stay to hear more of the dialogue, yet comforted him by saying, what remained should be deferred to a more convenient opportunity.

Colonel Fairfax had got off the stones about half an hour, and was proceeding slowly through a short sandy road, where the influence of the sun had occasioned a partial thaw, when a coach and six going towards London, passed by him, the motion of which was still more impeded than his own, by the depth of the soil. In such situations, it is not uncommon for passengers to bestow a glance on each other, *en passant*, and actuated by this mechanical inclination, which hardly deserves the name of

of curiosity, he carelessly turned his eyes towards the carriage, where they were fascinated by an exhibition, from which he wished never to have disengaged them; two ladies were seated in the front, but his attention was rivitted by one of them only, she was on the same side with himself; an infant that seemed about four years old, had fallen asleep in her lap, and reposed its cherub face on her bosom, whilst her own fair cheek gently pressed against that of the child, and her eyes were closed, as if she was partaking in its sweet and innocent slumbers; the whole contour of her countenance favoured the idea; it exemplified all the majesty of beauty, and all the soft insinuating graces of infantine simplicity; one lovely arm, divested of its glove, entwined the neck of her little charge, the other, which was cloathed, supported its waist, and the hand rested on its lap; a handkerchief, that had been loosely thrown over her head, partly concealed

veiled the treasures of her face, but added an interesting softness to those that were revealed, and altogether assimilated drapery, attitude and features, so intirely characteristic, and so happily blendid, as might have shamed the attempt of a less able master than nature herself, to produce another such Madona, so exquisitely moulded, so highly finished.

Colonel Fairfax was impressed with this idea, when he lost sight of the object; he had looked at the arms on the carriage, and observed the liveries, but knew neither; the crest was a bloody hand, and for a moment he felt a sensation, to which he had before been a stranger, and wished himself the possessor of what he supposed belonged to the Baronet, at least he wished to be the husband of such a wife, and the father of such an infant.

However

However strange it may appear to the ear of a beautiful female, who has hitherto listened to the language of adulation, rather than to that of truth, we will venture to assure her, that the deepest impressions the heart of man is capable of receiving, do not proceed from what is poetically called the unerring shafts of beauty; we are ready to allow, that beauty has, does, and ever will create admiration, and if to be admired is the only aim of its possessor, she can scarce fail of being gratified; this sentiment we will also admit, may assume the figure of love, and that the human heart shall be obliged to submit to the madness of his tyranny, because passion is at all times stronger than reason; but this sort of forced allegiance, is no more to be depended on, than that a prisoner shall be found in his cell, after he has conquered his strong enemies, and the doors of his prison are set open. Female beauty, like female honor, should be armed at all points,

points, the first to meet the awful criticisms of truth, and the second, firmly to resist the attacks of insulters. Truth is a severe critic, but if she acquits you, the malevolent remarks of falsehood shall be as harmless as they are contemptible; if they tell you your face is composed of lilies and roses, let not truth pronounce that these flowers were purchased at your perfumers; and when they say your eyes sparkle with vivacity, let it not be added, they wander in pursuit of conquest; are you praised for the ease of your manners, or the dignity of your deportment, take care that the one be far removed from levity, the other from arrogance; on the countenance of virgin beauty, as on coin before it is brought into circulation, should be stamped the impression that will ensure its currency; who that stops to examine the purity of the die, which should thus be impressed with a combination of maiden graces, and matronly virtues, but would
with

wish to secure one of them in his heart's cabinet, and there cherish it for ever as the brightest gem in his possession.

As Colonel Fairfax was proceeding on his little journey, and perhaps meditating on the beautiful vision that had glided by him about twenty minutes before, his attention was again arrested, but by an object very different from the former; and though it could make no claim to his affections, it certainly had a strong one on his humanity, as he immediately dismounted, and giving his horse to the groom, sprung forward to assist an old man, who he had long observed coming down, with cautious steps, over the gentle declivity, which he was just beginning to ascend, when by some accident or other, the stick with which he supported himself, had slid from his hand, and the Colonel saw them both fall to the ground together; philanthropy is never torpid, its motions are active and lively, he flew to-
wards

wards the prostrate old man, whose silver hair glittered in the sun beams, and having lifted him from the earth, enquired with much gentleness if he was hurt, or whether he could be of any further assistance. The stranger, who was wrap'd up in a warm great coat, of no extraordinary appearance, thanked him, not only with civility, but in terms of politeness, that did not seem to accord with his figure, or mode of travelling; he said he feared his ankle was dislocated, and should be glad if he would help him to reach the side of the road, where he could set down 'till his people came by; as he spoke in a low faint voice, the Colonel did not hear what he said so distinctly, but that he mistook the words my people, for those of some people, and not chusing to depend on accident, for performing an office of compassion, where his own efforts were sufficient, he looked round for a convenient place to which he might be removed, and
seeing

seeing a cottage at the distance of a hundred yards, he ordered his groom to alight, and with his help conveyed him to it. The hut consisted of a single room, and in one corner stood a poor little pallet, which on this occasion served as a sofa for the hurt person to stretch his leg on. The good woman, who was lady of the mansion, was in her person, and every thing about her, clean even to exactness; she was a widow, of rather more than fifty, and prided herself not a little, on her skill in repairing accidents, similar to that which had brought the strangers under her roof, and when Colonel Fairfax desired she would give his servant direction where he might go to fetch a surgeon, she answered, as may be found in the next chapter.

CHAP.

C H A P. XLI.

LACK a day, sir, there is no Doctor within ten miles of us; I do all the doctoring business myself, as far round as I am able to walk; and if the gentleman has broke no bone, I will cure him in half an hour; say you so, my good woman, replied the patient, then set about it instantly, for I am in exquisite torture; she did not wait for a second request, but ran out at the door, and soon came back with a number of bay-leaves in her apron, which having picked from the stalks, and put into

into a saucepan, with some water, while they were boiling on the fire, she sat about pulling off the stocking, which operation caused some additional pain to the patient, but she declared it would soon be over, and the success of her application warranted the assertion, for having first bathed the foot and ankle in the water, and afterwards bound on a great quantity of the leaves round the part affected, he declared himself perfectly easy, and taking out his purse, presented his doctress with five guineas, telling her he must still remain her debtor. If the woman was astonished at the magnificence of the gift, when a shilling would have answered all her moderate demands on his gratitude, the surprise of the Colonel was equally alarmed, at seeing such a donation bestowed by a person who he had pre-supposed would not have refused an offering made to himself, though it had been far less liberal. The stranger, who had often fixed his eyes on him,

from the first moment he came to his relief, seemed now to read the purport of his thoughts, and said with a smile of complacency, I believe sir, I have unintentionally led you into an error, I see you accuse me of profuseness, on the contrary, I am open to reproof, for the smallness of my acknowledgments to this poor woman, who has relieved me from abundant misery; had my heart been as enlarged as my means are ample, ought I not in conscience to have doubled the poultry sum, you would have done more; the specimen you have shewn of a right disposition, is a reproach to my narrowness of spirit, and I feel it here, said he, counting out another five guineas, take these also, and thank this noble youth, who in teaching me a lesson of humanity, has also taught me to reward it properly; when you remember the ease you gave your accidental patient, forget that the person so relieved, and who at first offered you so poor a recompence, has

has a rental of forty thousand pounds a year, and that he is the Earl of Delborough.

Colonel Fairfax was sitting on the side of his couch, he started from it, his face was suffused with the crimson of unutterable amazement; Lord Delborough! repeated he, ah Sir! he paused, is it possible! again he was silent, and his eyes were tenderly fix'd on his uncle; if you are really Lord Delborough, you will no longer honour me with your approbation.

The Earl presented him his hand, and replied with a warmth equal to his own, may the curse of heaven overtake me, if I ever renounce your friendship.

The hand he gave was respectfully pressed to the Colonel's lips, who gracefully bent down on one knee at the side of the bed; be your vow there registered, my

Lord, said he, 'till I cease to deserve your protection; but if I fail in my duty, then let it be blotted out for ever.

Your energy is the energy of honour, replied the Earl; I have not yet merited the fervor of your attachment, the glory of it is all your own, and proceeds from that philanthropy of soul, that has this day made me so much your debtor; you have laid me under obligations, and you shall not find me ungrateful. Your dress bespeaks your profession, and I take it on myself to make your fortune, and your merit more equal than perhaps they may be at present; tell me then, my excellent young friend, what is the rank you now hold in his Majesty's service?

I have the honor, my Lord, return'd the Colonel, whilst his manly eyes shone with filial love and military ardour, to bear the commission of Lieutenant Colonel in the

the army, and I have the superior happiness of owing my rank to your Lordship's patronage.

I beg your pardon, my dear Sir, replied the Peer, with a look of mingled surprise and consternation, I would give the half of my possessions, if that was really the case, but some mistake there is, and I cannot account for it; neither can I receive those acknowledgments which are the right of another; I never served but one young man in your profession, would to God it had been you! he was my nephew, but never did me service, nor have I deserved his attention, for I neglected him!

That nephew, my Lord, said the Colonel, who has been so unfortunate to render himself an object of your displeasure, is now before you, he implores your pardon, he beseeches you will not withdraw from the son of your brother the tokens

of affection you condescended to bestow on him, when you considered him as a stranger to your blood.

Lord Delborough, who had till then rested his head on the pillows, now started from them, and with a sudden motion, seating himself erect on his bed, he drew the Colonel nearer to him, gazed silently on his face, Yes, said he, your father is stamped on your features, you have not deceived me, you are the son of my injured brother, and — he could say no more, tears stopped his utterance, his head fell on the shoulder of his nephew, and he wept aloud.

Ah, my Lord, said the Colonel, with more emotion than he could conceal, let not my happiness at being numbered with your family, be obscured by throwing over it a cloud of retrospection which evidently distresses you, your kindness has told

told me that your heart condescends to receive me as no disgraceful relative, compleat the measure of my joy, by letting me see it will not be at the expence of your feelings, that I must for ever indulge it.

You shall be obeyed, replied Lord Delborough, tenderly embracing him, your consideration for my peace shall teach me to forgive myself, when I look on my nephew and call him the son of my adoption, then I will forget the cruelty of my past conduct, and the spirit of thy father shall no longer reproach me; he then enquired minutely about the situation, age, person and accomplishments of his niece; but before the one half of his many questions could be answered, the Colonel's groom came in to inform his master that Mrs. Edwin's carriage was in sight, and went back again with orders to acquaint the ladies where he was, that they might not pass by the door; as soon

as they were alone (for the old Doctress had retired before the interesting discovery was made to enjoy her good fortune in private) Lord Delborough laid an injunction on his nephew not to discover him to Emely till he had first seen her unprejudiced by relationship or rank, it was to your ignorance of either, added his Lordship, that I owe the most blissful moments of my life, and to which I am also indebted for a more favorable opinion of human nature than I have ever yet had occasion to adopt, I hardly supposed there existed such a sentiment as disinterested kindness, you have convinced me of my error; go and conduct your sister, not to her uncle, but to the object of her brother's humanity, and if she possesses the same dispositions with yourself, she shall share with you in the affections they have created.

He

He promised his Lordship that his commands should be punctually executed, and hastened out to meet his sister, exulting in the certainty of her victory, over a heart which was only to be conquered by gentleness and sympathy.

The carriage was now at the door of the hut, and the Colonel having kissed the hand of Mrs. Edwin, and tenderly pressed that of her lovely friend, he requested them to alight for a few minutes, and do him the honor to visit his cottage, where they should find a warm and welcome reception; adding, with the same air of gaiety, though I fear my old woman is not in the way to assist me in the ceremonial of receiving our visitors.

The ladies readily assented, the step was let down, he lifted out Mrs. Edwin, who was weak and emaciated; Emely followed, saying in a jesting accent, how very impatient

impatient she should be to embrace her new sister, and how sorry she was that she must not expect to find her at home; on entering the cabin they started at seeing an old man with venerable grey locks sitting up in a bed on which his legs were extended, he bowed to them both, which salutation they most courteously and kindly returned, and so little did his Lordship's appearance bespeak the dignity of his rank, that the same thought occurred to each of the ladies, that this must be the owner of the cottage, and that benevolence alone was the magnet that had drawn the Colonel thither; under the influence of this idea, whilst Mrs. Edwin was warming her hands at the fire, Emely looked round and round to find something that she might admire, and at last approaching Lord Delborough with a captivating air of sweet condescension, that would have suited an angel when employed on a message of mercy.

Your

Your cottage, sir, said she, is very small and perhaps not so convenient as you would wish it, but in my life I never saw any thing so charmingly clean, your wife must be a nice comfortable woman and I am quite sorry she is not at home, I should have liked very much to have seen her.

The Earl could not help smiling, he had much penetration and could have caught her that moment to his heart, and have acknowledged her for a true sister of his nephew, and there was but one woman in the world who he thought equalled her in the beauty of her person and the soft melody of her voice, but he restrained his impatience, he was convinced, but not satisfied, he could have looked at and listened to her for ever.

I fear, sir, continued she, you have met with some accident, I observe your leg
is

is wrapped up, and your posture must be uneasy, shall I endeavour to make it more commodious. There is no bearing this, exclaimed Lord Delborough, Charles come to my rescue, this girl has overpowered me.

Miss Fairfax thought the old man was taken with a sudden fit of insanity, and fled from him with a countenance of terror and affright that it is not in language to describe; her brother had in a whisper betrayed the secret to Mrs. Edwin, as they stood together by the fire side, and on hearing his uncle's words addressed to himself, he caught hold of Emely's hand, hastily announced to her who the stranger really was, and led the joyful trembling girl to the Earl's embraces, whose heart and arms were both open to receive her, she threw herself on her knees by his side, he leaned towards her, folded her to his bosom, called her his merciful, his adorable child,

child, and as he pressed her glowing cheeks with his lips, a tear fell upon it, on recollecting it was the first paternal kiss he had ever bestowed on her orphan sweetness.

Lord Delborough's expressions of kindness were not confined to his nephew and niece, Mrs. Edwin came in for a very liberal portion of them, and received a thousand acknowledgments for the fostering care with which she had cultivated the neglected blossom, so cruelly disunited from the tree that should have sheltered it.

Emely enquired into the fortunate circumstance to which she and her brother were indebted for their present happiness, and how it happened that his Lordship should be in that poor little cottage, without either equipage or attendants? The Earl took a great deal of pleasure in satisfying all her inquiries, particularly as they

they gave him an opportunity of rehearsing the amiable traits in his nephew's character, that had endeared him for ever to his affections; for his being alone and on foot he accounted, by telling them that something had gone wrong with one of the wheels of his carriage, that the servants had spied out the accident, and gave it as their opinion it might be attended with danger to go down the hill before the damage was repaired, that finding it would take up half an hour, and being exceedingly cold, his Lordship had got out of the carriage with an intention to warm himself by exercise, and directed that it should follow him as soon as it was restored to order; he said that in general he was a good walker, but his hands and feet being chilled, his stick had dropped from the one, in consequence of which the other failed him, and he came to the ground, as has been already related.

Instead

Instead of half an hour, in which his Lordship said he expected his carriage would have overtaken him, a full hour had elapsed from the time he had entered the cottage, and the Colonel's groom was now dispatched to see what was become of it; in the mean while the happy hostess, of her still more happy guest, again made her appearance, and having dropped a thousand curtesies to the ladies, and ten thousand to the Earl, she produced from under her clean check apron, some cakes, a bottle, and two glasses, which she gave them to understand she had borrowed, at the distance of half a mile, from one of her neighbours, for their entertainment: the liquor thus produced happened to be excellent clary wine, but had it been brandy, the Earl who was delighted with this homely effort of gratitude and hospitality, would not have excused his fair companions from carrying it to their lips. Sufficient honor being done to her repast,
the

the old woman again put her saucepan on the fire, and desired his Lordship's honor would be so well pleased to let her dress his leg once more before he went away, to which he readily assented, and Emely finding how much benefit her uncle had received from the simple application, made herself mistress of the composition and mode of using it, that if the pain should return after he got to London, she might be at no loss for the remedy which had been already so successfully applied, and with her own lovely hands gently performed the whole operation, by which time the Earl's people being arrived, he got off from the bed, and venturing to put his foot to the ground, assured them he could walk to the carriage with great ease; but neither his nephew or niece would permit him to make the experiment, and he was lifted into it by the Colonel and one of his own servants; just as he was going off, and

as he was bidding the old woman a very cordial adieu; she interrupted him by saying, with tears in her eyes, God bless your honor's Lordship, I shall never forget this blessed day as long as I live; such a windfall once in seven years might make me forget that I bean't always to live in this world, so it may be best for me not to have such a God-send as your Lordship but once in my life.

Emely, said the Peer, this good woman must be your pensioner, you have stole away her business, and must make restitution for the theft, I will be umpire between you, and I condemn you from this day to pay her, during her life, the sum of five pounds quarterly, my steward is a good sort of a man, I shall speak to him, and he shall assist you in the business.

The maitress d'hotel fell down on her knees, the heart of Miss Fairfax exulted

in the office assigned her, and his Lordship's two supporters bore him to the carriage, after which the Colonel handed Mrs. Edwin and his sister into their chaise, and as it had been before arranged, he took his place by the side of his uncle; and thus martialled they all proceeded on their rout to London. Colonel Fairfax having promised to join the ladies in Grafton-Street, as soon as he had safely conducted Lord Delborough to St. James's-Square.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.